

# Military Chaplains' Review

Summer 1991  
The Gulf War

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## Book Reviews

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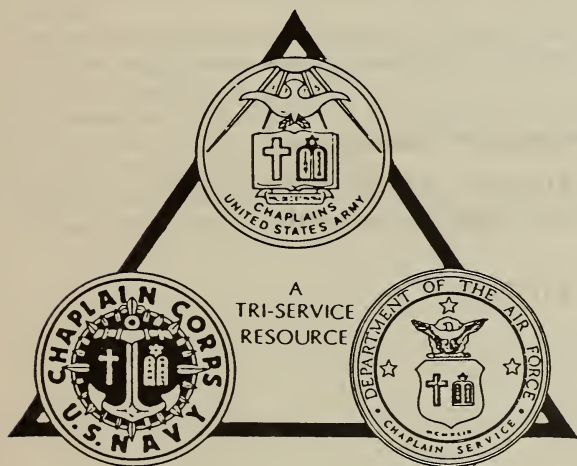
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# Military Chaplains' Review

Summer 1991







# Professional Bulletin of the US Army Chaplain Corps

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Chaplain (MG) Matthew A. Zimmerman

## **US Army Chaplaincy Services Support Agency**

Chaplain (COL) Thomas R. Smith, Deputy Director

## **Editor**

Chaplain (MAJ) Granville E. (Gene) Tyson

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**DESERT STORM 91 - Kuwait Jan 91**

A chaplain with the XVIII Airborne Corps conducts a religious ceremony during the "100 Hour War".

U.S. Army Photo by SGT Roman, 49th Public Affairs Det.

## Introduction to the Desert Storm Issue

In the past three years, we have had an unprecedented opportunity to capture for our successors some excellent records of chaplains in war. The Gulf War is the second conflict involving our military during the years 1989-1991. Both conflicts are well-documented by articles in the **Military Chaplains' Review**. I'm grateful to have been editor during that time, and to work with the earnest writers who have contributed articles to this and the previous issue on Operation Just Cause. This issue features a wide variety of stories, experiences, and lessons learned, from **United States Army, Air Force, and Navy chaplains and allied chaplains from Canada and the UK**. Their stories are fascinating, inspirational, and educational. We will be reflecting on these for years to come.

Note also that the **U.S. Army Chief of Chaplains'** training emphases are introduced in the last section.

Our next issue will feature articles on evangelism and discipleship in the military, to be published sometime before Christmas. (Maybe at Christmas!) Let it be your ministry gift to the spiritual lives of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines.

The **Military Chaplains' Review** will celebrate its **20th anniversary** in 1992. Our Winter 1992 issue will feature reprinted articles from the early days of the journal, articles looking to the future, and letters from **YOU**. What does the **Military Chaplains' Review** mean to you? How do you see it helping you in the next twenty years? How does it need to change? As part of our 20th Anniversary Issue celebration, please jot down some comments in a paragraph or two and tell how the journal has been meaningful in your life and ministry. We will publish all we receive in the Winter issue.

—Editor





## Psalm in Time of War

*Dedicated to all the men and women of the Storm.*

### I.

Come, let us sing our song unto the Lord

    In a distant land,

    In a desert land,

    Under a foreign sky.

Come, let us sing to the Lord.

How shall we sing in time of war?

How shall we call on the name of the Lord?

    When our weapons lie around us,

    Our enemy's land before us;

    When our shade is the shadow of our arms,

    Our hymn, the full-voiced roar of armor,

    Our choir, the sullen whine of turbines

        sweeping low?

Let us sing from our faith.

Let us sing to our God,

The God of our Fathers who sprung from these lands.

Today we return, sword in hand:

Father, do you know your son?

### II.

Bitter is our song today,

    Bitter, like brackish water left in our canteen,

    Bitter, like salt pills swallowed in the scalding sun,

    Bitter, like clouds of sand that block the sun.

Hear me, Lord. Listen to my bitter song.

Mine enemy has slain the weak

With careless zest, beggared the poor,

Destroyed for spite what he has seized.



Without warning did he strike,  
Slew his brother in his brother's home,  
In shame laid down his brother's wife.  
He seized what long he coveted,  
Then spat upon the rest.  
At his table, Hatred gloats  
As he gathers weapons, strange and vile.  
And yet—his brother is not mine.  
Nor are these lands my own.  
Why bait a living sphinx in his lair?  
The shame is his, not mine, to bear.  
Why then, am I called to fight?  
Why then, am I asked to slay?

### III.

Last night I dreamed.  
On a mountain ridge I stood:  
Virginia's hills, Virginia's woods  
Stretched out below. And here and there  
The homelights blinked beyond the barren boughs.  
In the distance, rumbling low,  
An eighteen-wheeler hastened home.

A watchdog barked—and there appeared  
A woman veiled in tears  
Alone beneath the stars.  
“Peace,” said I, and raised an open hand.

She did not speak, but stood like stone  
As silence crept between us,  
Stillness overran us  
Sadness weighed upon us.

Then all the stars blew out,  
And from this apparition burst an awful shout:

“Peace?” she cried. “Peace!” she shrieked.  
“How dare you call this peace?  
The rabid dogs of war run wild,  
On my husband's carcass they feast.  
The filth is there. Treachery reeks!  
And God, by all His sacred names,  
Covers up His face and weeps.”

Then slowly did the shrouded head  
Shake side to side in sorrow.

“Peace,” she sighed. “I lived with peace,  
And thought that peace would live with me.  
Poor fool I was.

But as for you,

I cannot judge.  
Say not you have no choice but war.  
You have the choice you always have:  
Between the seas, your land lies free  
Beyond his fist.  
You need not fight, today, at least,  
Though bitter war has come to me,  
Though chains and war have come to me.”

The watchdog barked—and she was gone.  
Virginia’s hills again rolled on.  
The stars again were bright and bold.  
Though she was gone the tale she told  
Rang still within my heart:  
“Between the seas, your land lies free  
Beyond his fist. You need not fight  
Today, at least, though bitter war is come to me.”

#### IV.

Our lights could not spare us this day,  
So now we bare our darker selves, and,  
Like warriors of old must pray:

Forgive us, Lord.

Today we set aside our pen  
And raise a diamond spear  
To strike a sphinx within his den.  
Give us strength to smite our foe.  
Grant us, on this evil day  
Forgiveness of our chosen fate,  
And the grace—for neither joy nor hate—  
To raise our sword and swiftly slay  
In Babylon, in Nineveh.  
Thus, for victory we pray.

But when sinks the bloodied sun,  
By the waters of Babylon  
We’ll weep, and plunge our grieving hands  
Deep in the eternal flow  
To draw rich draughts cupped within our palms,  
Free to lay aside our spears,  
And offer drink to the woman veiled in tears,  
And offer drink to all those veiled in tears.

This, we ask, by all Your sacred names.

M. C. Campbell  
January 15, 1991



*“We have shared the incommunicable experience of war. We have felt, we still feel, the passion of life to its top . . . In our youths, our hearts were touched with fire.”*

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

## **Chaplains in the Gulf War: A Collage**

**Granville E. Tyson**

Most of us were unprepared for the events that so quickly unfolded after 2 August 1990. But even after a massive mobilization which assembled over 500,000 allied troops and their equipment in the Saudi Arabian desert, many thought surely Saddam Hussein would have the good sense to withdraw from Kuwait. When he didn't and the war began, we realized this was what all of our training was about. Some seasoned chaplains perhaps were better prepared than others, but this kind of desert war was new and difficult for all. Chaplains performed their ministry well, however, and their reports are full of praise. They wrote about varied experiences, some serious and dangerous, others humorous and entertaining. All have some element of interest, whether they are British, Canadian, or American. Their stories speak for themselves.

### **Chaplains' and Chaplain Assistants' Ministry in the Gulf War**

U.S. Army Patriot Battalion Chaplain Rebecca Leckrone wrote “Ministry was much like that in the States; counseling, leading worship, and visiting. Only, in Saudi I became like an old-fashioned circuit-riding preacher. The [Patriot] batteries were scattered all over Eastern Saudi Arabia. Conditions were almost primitive: we had no running water, no toilets, no showers, no phones, no TV and no mail. We put our cots up outside and slept under the stars to the music of generators and F-15s. If it had lasted for three days it would have been an adventure like a wilderness camping trip. But it did not end in three days and it was not fun. The whole experience could be likened to the wilderness encounters in Scripture where one lives on the edge. On the return to Fort Bliss, it was wonderful to see the huge crowd of people waiting to welcome us back. Yet, each of us left a part of ourselves there,

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Chaplain (MAJ) Granville E. Tyson is editor of the **Military Chaplains' Review**.

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perhaps our innocence, perhaps our immaturity, perhaps a bit of naivete. This wasn't a video war. It was just plain war, and real people died."

SPC Gary Krom, U.S. Army Chaplain Assistant spoke of the spiritual dimension he saw in the war. "I was able to attend three Christian services in Saudi to witness believers come together in spirit with the risen Lord. One service in particular may have been unique in Saudi. The scene was at the 701st Main Support Battalion of the First Infantry Division's "Hubner" site beneath an old rugged cross. Eighty people gathered to celebrate the resurrection of Christ, and to witness six soldiers receiving the sacrament of Baptism by the battalion chaplain. In Saudi? That's highly unusual! But it happened."

U.S. Army Chaplain Ronald Wunsch reported a similar occurrence: the first worship service in history for American combat troops in Saudi Arabia. "Chaplain Solhjem preached, Chaplain Krause offered the pastoral prayer, and I celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Approximately 80 soldiers attended and most stayed afterward to express their appreciation for the opportunity to practice their faith. What an incredible feeling it was to share the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in that setting. How good and satisfying it was to be Army chaplains, providing Christian ministry to American soldiers in a Moslem land."

British Royal Artillery Chaplain Roger M. Burt summed it up: "It has been the most dangerous, demanding, and dramatic week I have ever experienced," speaking of the short, quick war. "Spiritually the men have grown. There's nothing that so concentrates the mind, soul, and spirit as the immediacy of war and the prospect of our own death. I had handed myself over to the Almighty by Saturday the 23d; I was prepared and ready for death . . . Strangely enough I seemed to be carried along through it. I am now certain that it was the power of prayer . . . many of the gunners have also said it. An unusual thing for a soldier. And not so much my prayer, but the prayers of the faithful Christians in UK and Germany. Sunday services (x6) were well attended by the gun batteries—I could count on 800 attendance—and a good number of communicants after each service."

U.S. Army Chaplain John J. Pendergast of the 82d Airborne Division experienced the war through a personal tragedy, and received ministry through his UMT counterpart, Sgt. James C. Hardesty. Having received a Red Cross message regarding his mother's serious illness, he sat down on his cot in the supply tent, "face in hands crying. [Sgt Hardesty] sat beside me and listened and listened and listened. Finally I asked him to pray . . . I remembered his words 'I'll do everything I can . . . ' as he started to pray for my mother and me. Sgt. Jim Hardesty's words of confident assurance in August, his spirit-filled prayer in October, and his daily presence during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm answered the question of who ministered to me the minister? My chaplain assistant."

## **The Troops and Their Needs**

Religious needs and experiences varied almost as widely as the number of persons involved in the war. Chaplains had their hands full of ministry



needs. U.S. Navy Chaplain Jon C. Fredrickson, minister to marines, reports he didn't have to go far to "find a need and fill it." A marine NCO came to him, introduced himself as J.J. and said, "Chaplain, let's have a meeting."

"What kind of meeting?"

"I don't care; A.A., AL-ANON, O.A., any kind of meeting you want it to be. I need a meeting."

That conversation led to many meetings in Camp 5, later termed the "Sand Dune Serenity 12-step Meeting."

Chaplain Fredrickson reports many marines came to him asking for a "real Bible." The pocket-size New Testaments weren't sufficient for these men who sensed the presence of history in the Bible lands they encamped upon. "Even the most irreverent wanted to read the Old Testament, especially the battle stories of Judges and the episodes of King David," reports Chaplain Fredrickson. One marine offered a comment on the fighting prowess of King David: "Chaplain, that David was a warrior wasn't he? He sure knew how to kick butt!"

British Chaplain Roger Burt writes about his artillerymen: "My admiration for the men of the Regiment is very high—they have all come from different regiments and units, and have managed to achieve a remarkable unity of purpose and of spirit. It was quite remarkable and wonderful to see their noisy determination, their abrasive language and their resolution of spirit undaunted by everything nature and Iraq could throw at them. There seems to be in Britons an extraordinary warrior spirit which only emerges at such times, but once found is nearly impossible to quench."

Chaplain Dennis Camp, Division Chaplain of the First Cavalry Division, saw hundreds of soldiers attend an Easter sunrise service. He reported that following the sunrise service more than 200 soldiers were baptized in a service in the desert. A hole was dug, then lined with canvas and filled with water. The soldiers were then baptized in it. Major Jeff Phillips was one of them: "The war experience made me realize the value of other people. It made me see that I couldn't do it alone. My baptism was also a testament to my realization that there were mortal and immortal forces at work there, helping me to succeed," said Major Phillips.

## **Close Encounters of the Unusual Kind**

Operating in a completely different and foreign, and sometimes hostile culture presented challenges for most chaplains. Yet with creativity and insight, and a lot of prayer, they overcame them. U.S. Army Chaplain Ryder Stevens of the 82nd Airborne Division needed a place for his brigade to worship. He had spotted a large, empty office building with a huge main computer room and several offices, but learned that the building was unavailable to him for a worship space. Undaunted, he prayed for two days, and with the brigade executive officer, Major Tim Skully, went to talk to Saudi Major Asani, who controlled the building. The introductions and ensuing conversations went well. The major asked, "What kind of services are you going to have in the building?" Chaplain Stevens explained, "My job is to ensure the free exercise of religion for all faith groups, Christian,

Muslim and Jewish, which are represented within the command. I would keep the big room a neutral sanctuary for prayers, so that any soldier could come in and be quiet and pray to his God."

"You don't want me to become a Christian?" Major Asani asked.

"No, I have a greater need for you to be a good Muslim as you do for me to be a good Christian, for are we not all children of our father Abraham?"

The Major handed over the keys to the building. Chaplain Stevens later joined him for tea, and they prayed together in the new building's "sanctuary." Major Asani then took Chaplain Stevens to the Mosque on their compound where he met the Imam and all prayed together, which Chaplain Stevens considered "a great privilege."

British Armored Brigade Chaplain J. W. Blair speaks of his encounters with the Iraqi prisoners of war "brought in with all sorts of wounds and in a dreadfully demoralised state. One chap was visiting relatives in Iraq, from America where he works and lives now: he was sent to the front with T-shirt and trainers." (Sort of like the motion picture **Not without My Daughter** in reverse.) He concludes, "This war moves so fast; the Iraqi army is being wiped out. There may be 500,000 of them in and around Kuwait, but they have no equipment worth talking about. This is like an international [soccer] squad taking on schoolboys . . . while we all feel sorry for these prisoners, at the back of my mind is the thought that people like these have been responsible for such dreadful atrocities in Kuwait."

British Chaplain Burt recounts a humorous incident which demonstrates the pitfalls of strange customs and unknown languages. On one quiet evening before the war began, he and his battery commander, Major Simon Lloyd (who could speak Arabic) spent some time with the local Bedouins. They entered the tent where the farmer and his five sons waited. They drank coffee and tea, spoke of the conditions of goat and camel raising, and inquired how their camels were. This last question so pleased their host that he ordered bowls of fresh, hot and frothy camel milk for the guests. Chaplain Burt and Major Simon politely "gasped and said 'ahh!'," and very loudly clapped our chests with our open hand," as was the custom. "I realised it wasn't too bad, and tried not to think of the very dirty, smelly camel which stood outside," wrote Chaplain Burt. After drinking two quarts of camel milk, the two thought they were through for the evening. However, the servant returned in a few minutes with another bowl full of milk. "I caught Simon's eye, and we went through the same 'ahh's' and clapping with open hand on the chest—and the bowl was passed again—and again—and again. How do you say 'no thank you' politely? Next time, I'll try to contain my enthusiasm."

## Chaplain and UMT Contributions during the Gulf War

How did we do? After the war, Chaplain John Cottingham, Installation Staff Chaplain at Fort Riley, Kansas, home of the First Infantry Division, asked that question of the brigade and battalion commanders of the Big Red One. These are some of their comments:



From a brigade commander: “[My chaplain] assists me in maintaining cohesion and morale. Very effective! Evenings at staff meetings he gave the staff an update and homily that reflected things relevant to what we were doing. He has a gift in keeping motivation up. He weaves thoughts and feelings together that we all have. He wanders around and gives me the scoop on soldiers’ thoughts and morale. For me, that was an invaluable service in building a cohesive outfit. He was invaluable. He supervised battalion chaplains and deifferent ministries and this ministered to soldiers. Also, he supervised the reintegration of soldiers. Should we have chaplains? Yes! Emphatically yes!”

A battalion commander considered his chaplain “a spiritual leader, a soldier’s friend, informal counselor, the insight to commander’s pressures; earns trust and confidence. The [chaplain’s] assistant is also key.”

Queried about the doctrine that places chaplains far forward in the battle area (Forward Thrust), one battalion commander asserted: [The chaplain] “must be in every maneuver battalion. You can’t do it any other way; the chaplain must be within reach to a fallen soldier. Before the war, every guy wants to make peace with God and the chaplain must be available to alleviate fear. After the battle, every soldier wants to make peace with the actions that took place in war and the chaplain needs to be at the unit.”

Chaplains’ ministry in the Gulf war was invaluable to their soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. They were mobilized into a real combat situation; discovered they had to operate in a strange land, with strange customs, yet adjusted remarkably well, demonstrating a keen sensitivity to their host country and its unfamiliar religion. They showed they were able to meet the challenges and rise above the difficulties, and deliver quality ministry under very stressful conditions. Doubtless some wondered how they could ever fulfill their mission in the face of such foreboding circumstances. But in the strength of their God, they prevailed.

Their faith, hard work, their ministry, and insights gained in war will be the subject of study for years to come. We will build upon and learn from their experiences they have so generously shared.

## Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the staff of the U.S. Navy Chaplain Resource Board for allowing us to quote from their publication **The Navy Chaplain**.

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Last, but not least, thanks to the U.S. Army chaplains and chaplain assistants who wrote of their experiences for this journal.



Chaplain baptizing a soldier somewhere in Southwest Asia.

## Scraps from a Desert Rat

### Douglas P. Edwards

For every UMT (Unit Ministry Team) member who took part in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, there is a story. Soldiers will write volumes of lessons learned. Cohabitation, survivability, supplies, ministry, and the division level UMT are the five areas I learned most about. This article offers raw material in each area. My goals are to reiterate what others have found and spark interest among "shakers and movers," and perhaps, also, to give the real thinkers something to ponder.

### Cohabitation

The UMT concept calls for a sharing of everything. Cohabitation of officer and enlisted can be anywhere from pleasure for some to pure hell for others.

First, let's consider the differences that normally exist between chaplains and chaplain assistants. Chaplain assistants at battalion levels are normally between 18 and 24 years of age. The average battalion chaplain is between 28 and 35 years old. This few years difference alone can prove to be trying at times because of the different ideologies held by each soldier. Combine this difference of peer groups with the education level of each (seminary versus high school) and you come up with what could be called a generation gap. Imagine these two people living in the same hex tent or a vehicle for seven months or more.

The chaplain assistant must be many things to many people. Companion to the chaplain is one of them. The chaplain is regularly under pressure from command. Though the assistant has pressures of his or her own, the

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SFC Edwards was the NCOIC of the chaplain's section of the 24th Infantry Division (M) during its 8-month deployment to Saudi Arabia. He has served in Panama, Korea, and FRG in previous assignments, as well as with the 101st Infantry Div (AA). Currently he is assigned to the US Army Chaplain Center and School in the Combat Developments branch.

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chaplain may need an understanding confidant at times. If the UMT is to minister to other soldiers with any success, the chaplain assistant must be sensitive to the chaplain's emotional and spiritual needs. This bond needs to be developed early, nurtured, and sustained. The next higher level UMT is not always readily available to provide this support. Teamwork in this area is crucial.

The UMT is hardly immune to the age old problem of burnout. Avoiding burnout is the responsibility of each soldier who faces it. As a team, these two soldiers have an advantage in working around burnout.

First off, the UMT must learn to have times of fun together. This, even in the desert, is possible if the two know when seriousness can be relaxed. Recently, a friend of mine told me "War is a great amount of boring time spent waiting for short amounts of heightened, intense activity." If a certain amount of joviality is absent during the long dull periods, the UMT could find itself high-strung and out of touch spiritually as well. As that same friend has often told me, "If you're not having fun, you're not doing it right!"

Hand-in-hand with fun together is fun with others. It is critically important that the UMT seek out friendships within their individual peer groups as described earlier. The chaplain should make it a point of encouraging the chaplain assistant in friendships among his or her peers. Too often the tendency is to retreat to the tent and spend all of what could be free time with each other. Friendships bring out the best in all of us. Chaplain and assistant cannot always be friends because of leader and follower rules. The need to express oneself freely with others must be met. This allows tensions to be released and the mind to regenerate through diversion.

Even if the round trip takes two full travel days with only one day of R&R, **take it!** Getting completely away from one another for relaxation periods ought to be done frequently. Though going to an R&R site is the best means of doing this, it is not the only way. If an opportunity arises for practical separation within mission requirements, take it. Once I spent the night with a cavalry squadron to sing at a prayer breakfast the next morning. It was refreshing to be on my own for such a rewarding experience. I returned with new perspectives on the situation, ready to assault any challenge.

Time alone, if possible, should be factored into each week. Having a set amount of time to call one's own is good for individual growth. This doesn't just mean one member of the UMT getting up and leaving for a little while, but having the other know when to expect the one back. Though this may be the hardest of my suggestions to accomplish, it is possible. Time alone is not truly "time alone" if the constant thought of interruption is present.

## **Survivability and Soldier Skills**

The best intended, planned, and executed religious coverage of any unit is for naught if the UMT cannot survive on the modern battlefield. There are several significant areas to discuss that can help the UMT survive. The



religious coverage plan must include survivability and soldier skills. We are soldiers who happen to be God's workers, not God's workers who simply wear an army uniform.

The 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) adopted the command policy of having all UMT members Combat Lifesaver qualified. A Combat Lifesaver does not replace a medic. He or she is trained in buddy-aid/first-aid for the battlefield with just a little extra medical training.

The soldier's primary mission always comes first. As the mission allows, a Combat Lifesaver's function is to keep the sick and wounded alive until fully trained medical help can attend to the patient. Since the UMT's location during the battle phase is with the medical section, this promotes physical as well as spiritual ministry. These enhanced UMTs have a much better chance of surviving on the modern battlefield.

Without a doubt, security of the UMT is a primary mission of the chaplain assistant. The chaplain assistant is a combatant. He or she carries a weapon and should be skilled in using it. This is not a secondary mission. In wartime there is no margin for error. The battlefield is everywhere.

Attacking enemy is not the only cause for concern. A high regard for safety is imperative. The modern battlefield is littered with unexploded ordnance and other dangers that require caution during ministry. Other considerations include not traveling alone and having the right equipment, food, and water necessary to avoid distasteful predicaments. This should be a concern of both UMT members. Let common sense guide you.

Just before the ground war of Operation Desert Storm we received a chaplain assistant fresh out of AIT. He was scared and unsure. His remarks suggested that what he had learned during AIT didn't prepare him for this. I'm not suggesting that any "school" could completely prepare anyone for war. The indications were that USACHCS had not changed its instruction program to include more wartime preparation of soldiers.

We need to train chaplain assistants to be warriors as well as to be an extension of the chaplain. More emphasis should be placed on the combatant role of the chaplain assistant. What good is a forward deployed UMT if both members think of themselves as non-combatants?

A very big aspect of security demands that the chaplain drive the UMT vehicle during wartime. If we fight like we train, then the chaplain should also do a good amount of training behind the wheel during peacetime. This frees the chaplain assistant to provide return fire should the UMT come under attack. Incidentally, this procedure was mandatory in the 24th ID(M) and modeled from 18th Abn Corps downward. When the time came for me to load my weapons, I felt comfort in knowing my hands and concentration were not distracted.

Throughout my years in the military more emphasis has been placed on enlisted soldiers learning common tasks such as first aid, NBC (Nuclear, Biological, Chemical) measures, etc. In combat units it is more likely that the enlisted ranks will use the combat skills, yet everyone will use common skills. It is important not to confuse the two.

If only the chaplain assistant is trained and qualified in common tasks, it is likely that he or she will have to "take care" of the chaplain. The team

approach to unit ministry calls for both soldiers to be qualified in common tasks. In this way the chaplain will be able to "take care" of the chaplain assistant when it becomes necessary. A good example would be checking a soldier while sleeping in MOPP4. The chaplain assistant could die while sleeping if the chaplain doesn't know what to look for.

Once hostilities begin it's too late to take a crash course in common skills. If the chaplain depends too heavily on the chaplain assistant in this area, the survivability of both UMT members is threatened. Most of today's Army doesn't force chaplains to train in common skills. It is up to the individual chaplain to include common skills in his or her training program. A bullet is not a bigot when deciding who it should kill.

Certain of our UMTs lost sight of why they were on the battlefield. The reports that disturbed me most told of UMT members volunteering for search and destroy missions. Being adventuresome is not prudent in this environment. While engineers cleared and destroyed bunkers in Iraq, all others were instructed to stay clear. Listening to the explosions day and night is enough excitement.

Reports came daily of soldiers becoming wounded or killed while collecting duds as war trophies. UMT members, it was told, joined some scavenger hunts. The UMT's mission does not involve this type of excitement. I can hardly call this R & R. This action undermines the very essence of the UMT's ministry.

When a chaplain or assistant finds himself or herself in such a situation unavoidably, then duty demands a follow-through of actions. Voluntarily separating from each other to help clear bunkers, handle EPWs (Enemy Prisoners of War), join an attack, or accompany search and destroy missions handicaps the UMT's ministry. First, it places half the UMT in danger. Second, if the chaplain is needed he is either unavailable or must find other security for himself if the chaplain assistant is on such a mission.

The real heroes are those available for ministry to the warriors. When the urge for adventure strikes, one should ask himself, "Why am I here?" Those who understand and can answer this question are the real soldier-ministers.

During Operation Desert Storm there were times when UMT members found it necessary to perform combat roles. The following is a short account of some of these instances.

During the advance into Iraq, the UMT of the 3/15 Infantry Battalion was placed with the combat trains. While in a small convoy following the front line of the offensive, SPC Jeff Howard found himself in charge of taking EPWs. These Iraqi soldiers had hidden inside their bunkers while the front line passed them by and cut them off.

SPC Howard quickly secured about 79 EPWs with a small group of men and maintained that security for 24 hours. He also led an evacuation and destruction of the bunker, leading to the capture of another five EPWs. A Bronze Star was recommended for his actions.

During the attack, SPC Ronald Putt was taking his turn as relief driver of the medical truck he had been placed in. A call for medical aid came. Casualties had been taken near his location. SPC Putt drove the truck through an artillery attack to reach the wounded soldiers. His medical team

was the first on site. He immediately began religious ministry as well as combat lifesaver procedures. SPC Putt was recommended for an ARCOM with V device for valor.

When the entire 24th ID(M) settled in southern Iraq, hostilities had ceased. The advance had been swift and deadly. War damage and dead were scattered along the roads for everyone to see. The task of recovering enemy and civilian remains fell to our soldiers.

Sensitive to the psychological effect on recovery teams, Ch (CPT) Benjamin Romer went with his unit's first search and recovery mission. His presence gave strength and encouragement to the soldiers during the emotional job of collecting body fragments. Especially noteworthy was his ministry to those gathering the remains of a young child. Throughout the division, UMTs emulated such ministry. For this kind of ministry, Ch Romer was recommended for the Bronze Star.

## Supplies and Equipment

Nothing was more tested and no greater lesson was learned during Operations Desert Shield and Storm than the religious supply system. The modern army was not prepared to equip or resupply the Unit Ministry Team.

The religious supply system established at the beginning of Operation Desert Shield can be summed up in three words. *There Was None!* In a land that had no Christian bookstores, UMTs made do with what they brought with them. Later, resupply from home stations filtered through the system. We usually received it months after it was sent.

By the time home station resupply had reached us our needs had changed. A good example of this was the need for whole bibles. Devotional material sent to us (which was always dated and late) used the entire bible. Soldiers quickly began asking for both Old and New Testaments. Home station based resupply on plans developed prior to deployment. I really can't say what happened to the 5,000 plus surplus New Testaments that could not be given away. Perhaps we shall hear of a Christian movement among Bedouin tribes soon.

I must say that the religious resupply system took great strides during Desert Shield. The development of a religious resupply kit with a national stock number probably won someone an award somewhere. The problem was in shipment and supply channels.

The kit was designed to flow straight through regular army supply channels. Our problem is that all supply personnel have been conditioned to watch for the word, "Chaplain" on anything. When this word appears on a box the supply clerk quickly notifies the nearest chaplain in the chain and promptly abandons the unwanted child on his or her doorstep. Just how that chaplain reacts decides how well the system will handle the next load.

Religious resupply was fluid by the time the ground war started. But the credit goes to the UMT technical channels, not supply channels. Coordinating problems arose and some UMTs never saw the resupply kits because they lacked aggressiveness in acquiring them. So much for the theoretical "Push-Fill" system.



The supply system failed many UMTs in another area—organizational equipment. Present MTOEs are most inadequate for division level and subordinate UMTs. First there is the ongoing fight over the UMT vehicle authorization; then, whether the UMT gets tents and what kind. The UMT gets low priority on many other supply needs that others seem to get in abundance.

UMTs need to be taught to stand up to the supply system at every level. “Turning the other cheek” to stubborn supply personnel leaves the UMT without support. As a result, soldiers receive a less-than-primed UMT. Those who avoid the supply system and the first clerk with a dazed look, encourage the system to ignore UMT needs. My point? Make the system work!

## Ministry

Ministry is, of course, what UMTs do best. We train for it constantly and practice it every day of our lives. As I’ve told many new UMT members for years, we are one of the few sections that have a real-world mission even during training exercises.

Chaplains and assistants understand that ministry is the primary mission of the UMT. Problems arise when commanders do not understand. Commanders receive training in the mission and usage of all staff sections at their disposal. My suspicion is that the chaplain portion of training is inadequate or ignored. This leaves it up to the individual unit chaplain to educate his or her commander in equipping and using the UMT. This should not have to be.

Commanders should have a better understanding about the UMT mission. This could be done at all levels of officer education. They are taught extensively on subjects pertaining to other staff sections. The UMT does not seem to share this advantage. Chaplains have assumed too much the role of trainer to others. If a commander knows the UMT mission from the outset, more support would be realized. An equal footing with other sections can make for successful ministry.

The commander’s attitude toward the UMT can make or break the ministry within a unit. Other sections often enjoy equal status among themselves somewhere above the chaplain. When the chaplain needs something, other sections either count it as a favor or a nuisance. Commanders can set the tone by which other staff sections interact with the UMT. Staff sections seeing their commander support the UMT will more likely do the same. Winning the commander’s respect and support should be a primary goal of all UMTs.

No matter what else happens, ministry must always be first. Administration, supplies, equipment, attitudes, security, common tasks, etc. are all small parts of the bigger equation: ministry to soldiers. Ministry is not an interruption of our work day; it is the essence of our mission. It is what separates chaplains from line officers. It is what separates chaplain assistants from clerks and drivers.

Chaplains are the pastors of the unit. The chaplain assistant may find

himself or herself supporting this role through peer ministry. Just as chaplains pastor others of higher rank, so must the assistant be mature enough to minister to superiors. I found myself many times during the war praying with, singing for, and encouraging senior officers as well as privates. Developing rapport for such ministry takes time and maturity. Such should be every assistant's goal.

Along with peer ministry is a vast amount of support the chaplain assistant can give. Many chaplain assistants did such things as lead choirs, provide special music, teach bible studies, hold prayer meetings, make hospital visitations; and the list goes on and on. Chaplain assistants can be more than just, "the extension of the chaplain's ministry." Many assistants developed their own ministries that complement the chaplain's.

Several chaplain assistants during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm had to operate without a chaplain for as long as three months. Knowledge of how to get the support from higher headquarters was essential and done well. No unit went lacking during these times. When chaplains were finally assigned to or reunited with the unit, they found religious coverage intact and ministry being performed.

Along with the comments I've made so far are a few operational issues pertaining to ministry. The following are just a few of the many lessons learned during the Gulf War.

The 24th Inf Div (Mech) had only three Catholic Priests during all of Desert Shield. Likewise, 18th Abn Corps depended on our one Rabbi for theater-wide Jewish coverage. Each had area denominational coverage along with unit religious coverage. This created a very busy schedule.

Since security was not as critical as during Desert Storm, chaplain assistants did most of the driving. The hectic and fast pace fatigued the assistants. It would have been better had the Catholic Priests been assigned either two chaplain assistants or a chaplain assistant and one driver. This would ease the burden on the single chaplain assistant resulting in safer travel.

As commanders prepared for land war, doctrines changed. A rule was made forbidding non-armored vehicles forward of the battalion field trains. Aid stations were located forward of the trains in armored personnel carriers. UMT doctrine had to be modified. For the battle phase UMTs were placed in armored medical vehicles. This permitted immediate religious coverage to casualties. Besides, most wounded never saw the field trains.

Most of our maneuver battalions had split their medical personnel into two groups. This was to enable them to cover more of the widely dispersed front line. The UMT separated, placing one member with each medical group, giving a larger religious coverage capability. The following example proves this tactic to be sound.

1/64 Armor Battalion is a UMT success story. Two M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles had taken hits from artillery. The medical group with the chaplain assistant arrived at the more serious of the two first. Spc Ronald Putt began immediately helping as a combat lifesaver. He also encouraged and prayed with the wounded soldiers until the chaplain arrived.

Ch (CPT) Timothy Bedsole arrived after his medical group had

checked out the other casualty site. Spc Putt briefed Ch Bedsole on the wounded and which ones seemed in most need of ministry. Both UMT members continued ministering and encouraging until a medevac arrived about four hours later. I have never heard a better example of UMT in combat action.

## **Division Level UMT**

Above brigade level is an area in the ozone layer known as division. I say this because the division level UMT does not really go to war like it trains. We learned a new method of operation. During Desert Shield things were close to a garrison environment. Desert Storm changed all that.

Though training was good during the waiting months before the war, we could have done better. In this respect, the division UMT continued its mission to prepare subordinate UMTs for war. Yet I believe we gained more through one-on-one interaction than during group training sessions. I wish time had permitted more personal meetings.

Our battalion UMTs depended on each other and the brigade UMTs for support, encouragement, and friendship. The brigade level UMTs had the division UMT only. Whenever possible we visited them and took time when they visited us. Being pastor to all subordinate UMTs is not the Division Chaplain's job alone. As Division UMT NCOIC, I took time with chaplain assistants. I was not just their technical supervisor, but also a friend and sometimes pastor.

Another area that was new for the division level UMT was full time troop ministry. Often the division UMT isolates itself from troop ministry because of its management function. We had to step back and make religious support plans at the very basic level.

Performing chapel services was commonplace for us. Visits to soldiers' work areas invited personal ministry. We gave fifty percent of our time to troop ministry. Perhaps Division UMTs should not remove themselves too far from grass roots ministry during peacetime.

An important lesson the Division UMT learned was its limited role during war. It was nine days after the ground war began before we contacted brigade level UMTs. Communications were nonexistent with forward chaplains. They were on their own. Training, pastoring, and friendships were but memories on which to call when needed. Strong UMTs must be developed at brigade task force levels for the close leadership required during war.

## **Conclusion**

My reflections on the Gulf war are opinion, only. I do not propose to modify Army doctrine; I'll leave that to the thinkers at higher levels. These are only observations, but I hope they will be considered as we look at UMT doctrine and training for the future.



# **Desert Storm Diary**

**Donald W. Myers**

## **Introduction**

The following clinical verbatim was written by Chaplain (MAJ) Donald W. Myers of the 382d Field Hospital, Augusta, GA, while in attendance at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, Fort Monmouth, NJ, from 10 April through 10 May 1991. The author kept a daily journal of his experiences during Operation Desert Storm, beginning on 17 November 1990, the day his unit was placed on alert, and ending 27 March 1991, the day they arrived home.

## **Preparatory: October and early November 1990:**

- Get ready! Our name is on the MOB list.
- Rumor control became very important!
- Still an unsettledness; Novelty, curiosity, news of the Persian Gulf became important.
- “What if’s” became important!
- Contingency plans became important also. Things like schooling, future plans, etc., etc., are going to have to wait.

## **Alert Notification:**

- November drills on the 3rd and 4th of November 1990 came and went without any incident. Still there were lots of rumors flying. We knew something was in the wind because of the uneasiness of the staff. There were more staff meetings with unknown guests (which we later learned

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Chaplain (MAJ) Donald W. Myers, USAR, is a protestant chaplain at the VA Medical Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Before deployment he was a Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor in training at Georgia Regional Hospital, Augusta, GA. He is endorsed by the American Baptist Church.

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were from the 2nd Army Mobilization Command, Fort McPherson, GA), than at any time before.

- Feelings of grave seriousness began to settle over the hospital unit by Sunday afternoon, 5 November 1990.
- Still the day came and went without any alert notification so we left with mixed emotions of anger and curiosity.
- There were 2 practice alert notification drills between 5 Nov and 17 Nov when the actual alert notification came. In particular, one I remember on 11 Nov came at home from the S1 telling me to report to the USAR Center on 12 Nov with my duffle bag. One hour later it was rescinded forcing me to make two phone calls to employers I made in the meanwhile.
- All of this was termed “Standby Alert.” By 11 Nov I knew it would only be a matter of time before the 382d was called up.
- The final notice came on 17 November 1990. The night before, the S1 called me and told me to report to the Center at 0700 the next morning. This was a “Roaring Bull”—the code word for FULL MOBILIZATION.
- That night I did not sleep well. I tossed and turned in my sleep. I would reach out and touch my wife’s warm body and cry. I could not let her go. I was wrestling with some awful feelings of loneliness, despair, anger. I just knew what the next day held.

## **Saturday, 17 November 1990 - 0700**

- We did not know it, but the commander was called the day before and told to muster the 382d for formation the next morning (11/17/90), for an important phone call from the 818th Hospital Center at Fort Gilliam, GA, at 0700.
- So there we were, all 377 of us standing in formation at 0700 when the phone rang. A runner came out of the center telling the Commander he had a phone call. (Most of us were shocked, stunned, and hoping it wasn’t what we knew it to be—Full Mobilization!!!)
- Soon the Commander came out, looking very serious and gloomy, with a yellow phone memo in his hand. We are called to “Attention to Orders” and what we already knew was read to us.  
“The 382d Field Hospital has been called to Active Duty for 180 days to provide medical coverage during Operation Desert Shield. Effective date 27 December 1990. All soldiers will report to the USAR Center with full duffle bag, web gear, and personal equipment at that time.”
- FEELINGS, REACTIONS: Shock, numbness, some weeping and crying, and soldiers turning to embrace and hold one another. Those that always displayed a show of strength turned into sobbing creatures of the flesh. Soldiers rushed for a telephone everywhere. For many there were signs of relief that now they knew. For those out of work, at least now they had a job. Many resident doctors with only a year left of training fell apart emotionally. (Later, their orders were rescinded bringing much relief!)
- UNIT MINISTRY TEAM (UMT): We two chaplains and our two assistants were kept busy all day counseling and helping soldiers work through their feelings. Never mind the fact that chaplains assistants were only “assistants.”

As long as they represented “God” they were needed. And what about our own feelings as chaplains? Forget the fact that we were as numb as everyone else. We had to be strong for the weak. (I was exhausted at the end of the day.)

## **Home Station:**

- Two holidays were coming up, i.e., Thanksgiving and Christmas. I did my best to be natural and accommodate our relatives, friends and guests, at home, church, work, and school. But all the while, within inside me, I was preoccupied with this “war business.”
- It was never so clear how it affected me until one day I was deer hunting (at my youngest son’s request) on the back of Fort Gordon, GA., when a nice 6 point buck walked under my deer stand and I refused to shoot him because I thought to myself, “He wants to live like I do so why should I kill him. He doesn’t deserve to die, so let him go.” This was the first time in my life I have ever let a deer go. The second incident was when I got down out of my deer stand around 10:30 am, and walked over to where I left my son and found him sound asleep. I could not wake him but wanted to set down against a tree and watch my precious off-spring until he woke up naturally. After all, I reasoned, I may not see this sight again. “God, how this was hard for me!”
- THANKSGIVING DINNER tasted bland to me. There were lots of guests but still my mind was preoccupied with December 27th—two days after Christmas!! “Was everything in order?” “Will my wife and two sons be alright?” “What can I do to help them more before I go?” Every minute, every hour, every day became so precious to me. I found myself spending as much time with these three wonderful people in my life as I could. And of course was always the nagging question, “Would I see them again?” “Will there be another Thanksgiving for me . . . with them . . . with us together?”

**BOTH MY CIVILIAN CONTRACT JOBS WERE AT RISK OF BEING ELIMINATED IF I LEFT.**

- The VA said they might be able to do something for me when I returned.
- The State of Georgia Prison system said they would need to fill my position soon after I left.
- Feelings of rage and anger, hurt and confusion, overwhelmed me because I felt rejected and “cast off” by two systems I had been trying to get into full time for three years.
- To compound my feelings, a full time position did come open at the Augusta, GA., VA, but since I was under orders, it would have to be filled by someone else.

## **Christmas 1990**

- Guests came and went but they didn’t know how or what to say to my family.



- We are only two days away from reporting to the MOB STATION.
- Christmas Day went something like this: Drag yourself out of bed, shave, get dressed, eat breakfast, prepare turkey and place in oven, write down things on 3x5 cards you need to pack, people to call, addresses to take, eat dinner, open guests presents, happy for lots of cologne because I can take that, the new ties and shirts will have to stay, (perhaps my two sons can use them since I may not return,) “God, I’ve never noticed how beautiful my wife and two sons are . . . or my relatives . . . or how nice this home is . . . everything I have taken for granted all these years . . . two days to enjoy them. O Lord, don’t let this day pass. It’s so beautiful. What if this is my last? This “war business” stinks! Why did I even join the Reserves?”
- December 26, 1990. Pack, pack, and re-pack. The entire day is spent in going over things with wife on paying bills, what to do in case of emergencies with car, unknown knocks on door at night, strange phone calls, illnesses, if you receive word of my death, an audio cassette is made of my last thoughts to my dear and wonderful family. (My wife said she would never listen to it. The very thought of the tape brought tears to her eyes!)

### **Move to MOB Station - December 27, 1990:**

- For three days we packed our UMT’s equipment, prepared personal papers, and assisted other sections in packing.
- On 30 December 1990, 5 busses pulled up in front of our center and packed one half of the unit and their personal bags and took us to Fort Gordon, GA, (about 5 miles) to our MOB point. After unloading us, they went back to the USAR Center and got the other half.
- This send off was hard but not as hard as the one to come on January 21st. The news team from Channel 6, Augusta, GA was there. Flags, banners, and ribbons were flying, children crying, wives hugging their husbands, etc. etc., but at least we knew for the next few weeks we would be able to see our families as they met us after training hours at Fort Gordon.
- Many took this as the final move. (Since many attached people were joining us from other states to bring us up to full strength and their family members had to return home, this was the real thing. There was much sadness amidst this group.)
- UMT’s were kept busy with ministering to these folks. We would offer assurance . . . that God is with us . . . everything will be alright with the 382d. We could not divorce ourselves from the fact that at least most of us had 2 or 3 weeks left to see our families. These people needed assurance and love now! Never mind the future . . . the future is now. (For me personally, this was a prelude of how I would handle my own departure . . . January 21st.)

### **MOB Station December 27 1990 - January 21 1991**

- Day begins at 0500. First formation is at 0600. Then formations at 1300, 1600 and 1800.



- Meals at the dining facilities are delicious! (I'll say this, the Army takes care of its own.)
- Days consist of NBC training with full MOPP 4 equipment. The gas mask becomes a permanent fixture at our sides for the next 3 months. No formation without it!!! Then classes on decontamination, firing ranges, in-processing for gas mask eyeglass inserts, new eyeglasses for those who wear glasses, 6 or 7 shots, including the all famous hemoglobin in the hip, green ID cards, briefings from a 3 time Purple Heart veteran in Vietnam on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Security, Heroism Under Combat, and the all famous "Patton" film starring George C. Scott. Other briefings: Desert Safety; Middle East Orientation; Middle East Customs and Traditions; Geneva Convention and Rules of Engagement.
- FEELINGS/REFLECTIONS?? Slowly, but surely, our families are falling further and further behind in importance. Survival is the keyword. How am I going to survive under combat and in an NBC environment? What is the "secret" weapon that Saddam Hussein is talking about? What can I do about surviving during those SCUD attacks? What am I going to do if they are loaded with chemical weapons. Will a MOPP 4 suit work?
- I have a new family now. It is the 382d. I must learn to rely on them and them on me. New friendships are being made. Too much fraternization is going on. People are scared. (Is being scared an excuse or liberty to cheat on your spouse? This became a major concern in many units in Eskan Village because of the living quarters.)
- UMT: A building was reserved for the UMT by the Commander for soldiers who needed counseling after duty hours. Literature, Bibles, and religious services were made available to everyone. Catholics were soon made happy by the arrival of Chaplain (MAJ) Paul Lemoi from Providence, Rhode Island. Paul fit in beautifully and is presently working with Chaplain (LTC) Hoffman and Duke at the Daharan Airport.
- While waiting for Chaplain Lemoi to arrive, to provide Catholic coverage we asked for 10 Catholic volunteers who wanted to become licensed eucharistic ministers to attend classes with Chaplain (COL) Tom Confroy at the Center Chaplains Office at Fort Gordon. Father Confroy instructed them and these 10 people proved to be very useful once we were in the desert.

## **Mobilization Troop Command People:**

- High tech has even come to these people for they used cellular phones to keep the command aware at all phases of the MOB process of the 382d's progress. (They reminded me of "watch dogs" or concentration camp guards. If we dragged our heels, stole away for some private times with our loved ones, or went to the Clothing Sales or PX, they seemed to know about it.)
- They had one mission, i.e., getting us ready to deploy at a specified time.
- Times were not happy when we got behind. The First Sergeant and Commander got more abusive with their language!
- We knew by now that we were going to King Fahad National Guard

Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and we were needed there immediately!! At the time, we didn't know why, but later found out that they lost over 75% of their international staff who fled the country for fear of the SCUD missiles. We were to help in the care and treatment of not only our own injured, but the Saudi National Guard soldiers and their dependents who frequented the hospital for routine hospital care.

## **Monday, 14 January 1991 - (One Week From Departure!)**

- Pressure is building. The Commander is edgy and easily upset. All POVs are to be taken home by loved ones. Any POVs seen in the parking lots surrounding the billets, will be towed away by MPs. (Quarantine impossible to enforce. Loved ones, girlfriends, and boyfriends pick up their loved ones at night after dark).
- Problems getting eyeglass inserts from Ft. McCoy. Better and faster service from Charleston Naval Hospital.
- The 382d is near validation by Friday, 19 January 1991. On Saturday, we are told we will be traveling in nine buses to Charleston, SC, for air embarkation. Viewed film "Patton", as a unit, on Friday at COL Powell's recommendation.
- The Advance Party of twenty-five people left for Riyadh, 15 days ago.

## **Monday, 21 January 1991 - Departure Date.**

- Felt much better this past weekend. At least I know when we are leaving and where our unit is going. (Knowing those two things took a lot of pressure off everyone.)
- 1500 - 9 busses take 450 of us to Barton Field on Fort Gordon for parade.
- 3000 family members present. Dignitaries include Senators Sam Bernard and Wych Fowler, Mayor Charles Devany of Augusta, GA, MG Peter Kind, CG of Ft. Gordon, and BG Webster of 818th Hospital Center bid us farewell.
- So many people. I and several others could not find our family members for first 15 minutes of 30 minutes we were allowed to visit, following speeches. (I will make note of this in my diary of how better to locate my family after parades next time, i.e., a designated tree, telephone pole, street corner, etc. etc.)

## **Move To APOE:**

- First sergeant blows his whistle. All soldiers move slowly to their busses. Time: 4:30 pm. Weather is windy and very cold. Can hardly feel it because of intense sadness and heartbreak.
- Post Chaplain has his own chaplains out, one stationed at every bus door. (I thought that was nice). My oldest son, age 21, grabs me in utter disbelief and shock. He hugs me and sobs uncontrollably. He is overcome with grief. I pull aside from others to pastor him.
- Before boarding the bus, I tell my family where I am seated. They move to the other side of the bus and we watch one another through the shaded

glass . . . throwing kisses and hugs . . . silent messages . . . through milky eyes. Soldiers moving slowly through bus aisles not big enough for a soldier loaded with equipment going off to war. (Duffle bags, ruck sacks and one personal bag were loaded earlier at cantonment area in bus's undercarriage.)

- 1700 - Busses pull out under MP escort. At front gate, county and state police meet our busses and we are escorted to South Carolina line where we are left on our own. The blue lights flashing remind us of the seriousness of all this. We are going off to war! We are deep in thought.
- FEELINGS/REFLECTIONS: The bus is quiet. Everyone seems to be in shock. I feel lonely, scared and hurt. "Six months . . . maybe a year? Maybe never! Who amidst these great people I've grown to know and love these past four years, won't return? Are you there God?"
- 2000 - Arrive at Charleston AFB, South Carolina.
- 2400 - Billeted for the night in AF dormitories. I bunk with two doctors in my room. So tired!
- 0400 - Reveille, 22 January 1991  
Breakfast at an AF dining hall. Delicious!
- 0500 - Board AF shuttle busses to air terminal.  
Wait 3 hours. Some sleep on cots. Others write letters. Some make their final telephone call. Red Cross present. They have doughnuts, hot coffee, juice, and care packages available. I receive my first "Any Soldier" letter from a high school student in Orlando, FL. Thank you Red Cross!
- 0800 - 22 January 1991
- We board shuttle busses again and ride to our airplane, an American Airlines DC-10. (One half of the 382d left the night before).
- The crew are glad to see us and welcome us aboard, but sad because of our mission.
- I try to cheer some of the crew members.

## **Deployment: Tuesday, 22 January 1991**

- Make 2 refueling stops at Boston, MA, and Rome, Italy.
- Land in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, at the Saudi AFB, 1730.
- Everyone works steady to unload aircraft and load equipment on 18 wheel flatbed trailers for trip to Eskan Village.
- Airline's crew uneasy about being on the ground for very long. They want to be airborne and on their way home. (I was soon to find out why—SCUDS!)
- 2130 - Busses take us to our high rise apartments at Eskan Village about 35 miles south of Riyadh.
- 2230 - Air raid sirens go off. Stop unpacking and put on CPOG, mask, gloves, and boots. Take shelter in apartment hallways away from all windows. Missile landed harmlessly in desert. Undress; back to getting set up in room.
- 2400 - Cot set up. Try to rest. So tired and exhausted and hungry.
- 0130 - Air raid siren again. Don MOPP 4 equipment. Missile went to Israel. Unsuit, back to bed.
- 0230 - Third air raid warning. Put on MOPP 4. So sleepy, tired and



exhausted. All clear given. Go to bed, this time with MOPP level 3. Masks lays in cot alongside me.

- 0400 - Fourth air raid warning. This time the real thing. Again missile goes to Israel. What a night! This time I'm too alert to go back to sleep. I eat an MRE (Meal Ready to Eat.)
- Wednesday, 23 January 1991 - Trying to settle in all day. No water in apartment building. Broken water pipe in ground outside of building.
- Wednesday and Thursday nights, 23 and 24 January 1991. More SCUD alerts. Deal now with my own anxiety. Adopt Romans 14:8 as my Desert Storm verse:

“...and whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.”

Great peace and assurance comes over me from this wonderful verse. (It becomes my mainstay throughout Desert Storm.)

- Friday night, 25 January 1991. Another SCUD attack. One soldier in our suite begins to become highly anxious during the attack. He stands to his feet, removes his gas mask and says, “I can't take this anymore. I don't feel good and need everyone's help.” Two nurses in our suite get him to lie down on the floor. They feel his pulse. It is rapid and his breathing is heavy. They remove his CPOG coat and gloves. He is having a full blown PANIC ATTACK. Once calmed, he is taken to the 17th Med Detachment to see a psychiatrist. He finds himself in a few days and is able to resume his mission.

(This same night I injured my back on the second SCUD alert by trying to pull on my rubber boots in a prone position. Others help me to bed. I'm sore for a week.)

## **King Fahad Hospital Ministry**

- The 382d checked into the hospital on Saturday, January 26 1991. The hospital staff briefed us in the auditorium about job assignments and duties. We were then given our ID cards, uniforms, and taken on a tour of the hospital.
- The 382d would be working alongside the 316th Combat Support Hospital from Harrisburg, PA. (They arrived 3 weeks before us and were already in place.)
- Their two chaplains, Ch (1LT) Tim Butts and Ch (LTC) Bill Beck, along with our three, made five that would be called “Social Workers.” (Other chaplains in the theatre were called “Morale Officers.”)
- The Saudis did not like the idea of having Christian Chaplains in their all Moslem hospital and required we be called by our rank only—never the word, “Chaplain.”

## **Unit Ministry Team (UMT)**

There were five U.S. Army Reserve chaplains stationed at King Fahad National Guard Hospital during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.



King Fahad Hospital is a 400 bed modern, state-of-the-art, military hospital that provided all levels of acute care for Saudi Arabia's National Guard soldiers and their dependents. The two U.S. Reserve units, the 382d Field Hospital from Augusta, GA and the 316th Combat Support Hospital from Harrisburg, PA, provided some 800 medical support personnel to replace over 75% of the international staff that voluntarily chose to return to their home countries for fear of the SCUD missiles. The 316th arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, approximately three weeks before the 382d arrived on 23 Jan 91.

The UMT consisted of two chaplains from the 316th, Ch (LTC) Bill Beck (Lutheran), Ch (1LT) Tim Hubbs (Catholic), and three Chaplains and three Chaplain Assistants from the 382d. The chaplains were Ch (MAJ) T. Joe Lusk (United Methodist) and Ch (MAJ) Paul Lemoi (Catholic). The Chaplain Assistants were SSG Sylvester Brown, SGT Carol Trowbridge and SGT Beth O'Hollorin.

## **Work Schedule**

In the beginning, we agreed on a three day, twelve hour work schedule. There were two shifts. The first was from 0700 to 1900 and the second, 1900 to 0700. We were then off for two days and repeated the schedule, except working the opposite days (or nights) different from what we previously worked the cycle before.

Within three weeks we decided to try two days on and two days off on twelve hour shifts. Everyone preferred this and we stayed on this schedule to the end of the war.

## **Transportation**

The UMTs had no individual transportation. Both the 316th and the 382d utilized busses loaned to us by the Saudi government. It took 35 minutes to travel over major highways from our billeting area, (Eskan Village) to King Fahad Hospital. There were times I desired safer transportation because of the way Saudis drove their automobiles. All of our bus drivers were licensed drivers from our units and did an outstanding job getting us to the hospital for the various shifts. It was the Saudi drivers in their cars that made us nervous. Speeds were excessive and coupled with an abrupt boldness made us apprehensive most of the time. (I actually think we feared the 30 mile bus trip more than SCUD missiles!) Motor vehicle accidents, incidentally, are the number one killer of the Saudis.

## **Chaplains Were Called 'Social Workers'**

At the request of the hospital's administrator, chaplains were to be called "Social Workers." In the beginning, we were not welcome at all, but the 382d Commander convinced the administrator that American casualties would greatly benefit by our presence as much as the Moslem soldiers would by their Iman being present. He saw the logic and consented. There are two stipulations: 1.) No crosses could be seen, and 2.) The word

“Chaplain” would be substituted by the word “Social Worker.” Our Commander, being a forensic psychiatrist and a wise person, thought that a fair trade and got us in. The alternative would have been to have us minister to the support personnel quartered back at Eskan Village. Patients then would have had no coverage. There were other things we were not allowed to do:

1. No evangelizing of Saudi patients.
2. No open prayers or Bible readings.
3. Ministry could not be done openly but only behind a drawn curtain.

## **Mixed Feelings On Everyone’s Part**

Not only chaplains, but doctors, nurses, officers and enlisted were hurt (and angry) over two particular issues, i.e. the term “Social Workers”, and “the removal of the cross.” Part of it came from the fact they felt bad for us thinking we felt bad. The other was the fact their chaplains were reduced to something less. (It was comforting to know they supported us and showed us in a new way how much they thought of our positions as “chaplains!”)

I personally went through an awkward stage of trying to adjust to my new title and assigned duties. What was really trying was the international staff of Canadian and British nurses using us like social workers! We were called upon to buy cigarettes, newspapers, magazines and toiletries for the patients at the gift shop. Our very office title was “U.S. Army Social Workers.” Even our soldiers of both units got in the game playing of calling us by our rank first, or the term “Social Worker Myers!” The game got sick in a short period of time and we began to shut down the circus. Quietly at first, we reminded our own people to call us “chaplains” whenever no one was around but Americans. Next we gently kept reminding them who we were (and not forget it)! When they saw our “holy boldness”, we all became unafraid to face the lions and, doctors and nurses alike began (openly) to call us again “chaplain”. In time, we learned all the Saudis knew who we were anyway, and what the chaplains were there for. The impasse broke when we took all we could stand and believed our ministry there was as viable as the next discipline.

## **Issue of the Cross**

We chaplains had a choice. We would wear either another rank in place of the cross, or the Medical Services insignia. I wore the latter on my lab coat and put the silver cross on a 3 x 5 card inside my lab coat pocket. In introducing myself to an American soldier, I would say something like this:

“My name is MAJ Don Myers. I am a Social Worker but you probably know me by another title (showing him my hidden cross inside my hand.)

The soldiers were so glad to see me. One now can see, there are more ways than one to overcome the hurdles of life.

## **Patient Information Sheets**

Most of the “Social Worker” expectations on the part of patients was resolved by adding to this sheet as the need arose. We let it be known what we “Social Workers” could and could not do. It was read to them within 24 hours of their admittance and (if possible) they signed it. We left a copy with the patient and when unrealistic demands came, it was a simple matter of reminding them that we could not fulfill their request because it was on their P.I.S.

## **Summary**

In looking back, like anything new (and in our case, Christian pastors in a Moslem country), we had to show the Saudis they had nothing to fear. Within one month, we were fully accepted and going about our work. (We always remained cautious though to draw a curtain around a patient's bed when we wished to pray, serve communion, recite the rosary, or read scripture.) I am convinced that in future deployments to the Persian Gulf (God forbid) Saudi Arabia in particular, dhaplains will be accepted with very little reservation.

## **Actual Patient Ministry**

I don't remember any of us five chaplains or three chaplain assistants trying to evangelize Arab patients, but on the other hand, I picked up many plastic kits containing four Islamic teaching tapes and seven booklets, off American soldier's beds. This expensive tool was meant to win over young soldier's minds to Islam. (I gave one of these kits to the U.S. Army Chaplain School for reference.)

## **Lessons Learned In A Combat Ministry Environment**

Pastoral care for me is being there for my patients in their time of spiritual need. The chaplain represents God and enables the patient to relive and get in touch with his faith experience. A chaplain is at his best when his own faith experience has been enriched through daily devotions and mediation and he is in touch with himself and his feelings. Because of the short duration of the ground war in Operation Desert Storm, (February 25 - 28, 1991) and the relatively small patient case load we had at King Fahad Hospital, there fortunately was ample time to prepare myself spiritually and emotionally for the battlefield casualties. Other chaplains of evacuation hospitals near the front may write of different experiences than my own. The reader needs to remember that I was assigned to a field hospital unit and the dozen or so patients I saw were first seen by medics, the aid stations and finally evacuation hospitals before they were flown on to Riyadh, some 250-300 miles from where they were first injured, days (and in some cases) weeks earlier. I don't want to mislead the reader in thinking I was not emotionally strained at times in dealing with these casualties. The following



five soldiers were ones I learned the most from. Others played a significant role in my growth as well, but they must wait for another time.

## **1. An Infantry Soldier**

Samuel was a twenty-six year old Army infantry specialist who was shot in the upper legs while trying to clear out an Iraqi bunker on the first day of the ground war. The major arteries in his legs were severed completely and he needed several transfusions of blood immediately. The medics on his evacuation helicopter can be regarded as heroes in my book for they gave him the only two units of A positive blood they had, stopped his bleeding and kept him from going into shock. When Samuel arrived at the 91st Evacuation Hospital, just inside the border of Saudi Arabia, they had used up their A positive blood supply on other casualties so there was none left to give Samuel. That did not stop the 91st from saving Samuel's life. One by one, those soldier/medics/doctors of the 91st who had A positive blood laid down along side Samuel and gave him their own blood by direct transfusion to keep him alive. Such heroism and dedication is in keeping with the 91st history, for a doctor in the 382d Field Hospital who served with the 91st in Korea, told me they did that once before in Korea.

Samuel and I became the best of friends at King Fahad Hospital. I was his pastor and friend who was always there for him both before and after his surgeries. His bravery and desire to want to get fixed up soon, so he could rejoin his unit on their drive into Iraq, will always stay with me. His gung-ho macho image soon melted through within two weeks and that was the beginning of my lessons learned from Samuel.

### **Lessons Learned:**

Reality soon sets in for all of us once the trauma is over. Samuel needed lots of emotional support and anxiety counseling as he had to deal with a far greater problem than his physical injuries—his emotions. Within two weeks he began to express feelings of guilt for the number of Iraq soldiers he had killed. (Some of them he thought later might have wanted to surrender but he couldn't take the chance). I purposed in my heart I would give him as much time as he needed. What followed were different pieces of the puzzle that fell together for Samuel each time he told his story. But with each piece came a new assurance, less anxiety, and a more positive sign he was returning to reality.

Ministry in a combat setting is different from regular hospital ministry in that emotions tend to be more strained and repressed. Guilt, shame, and confusion abound, and it is the chaplain's responsibility to know how to recognize and deal with them.

## **2. An Intelligence Officer**

1LT Paul R., age 25, received a flak wound in the calf of his right leg. He like all of these soldiers mentioned received a purple heart. I met Paul one night on my evening rounds. He was sitting in his bed reading a mystery novel when I walked into his room. After telling me what happened to his leg, I became caught up with his experience and for a moment or two,



forgot I was a chaplain. He next asked me if I would like to see the piece of flak the doctors removed from his leg. Because I am a curious person, I said "Sure, why not." After he handed me the bottle containing the metal, I proceeded to unscrew the bottle. He suddenly exclaimed, "Chaplain, don't open that bottle for it was taken from my leg and it won't smell good." His remark was like a wound to my heart for I forgot that we all have a sense of dignity and privacy about us which we don't like others to trespass on without special invitation. A patient's body is their own. Who was I to approach upon Paul's personhood when I hardly knew him? I was at an impasse instantly and I knew there was only one way out, i.e. acknowledge my uncanny curiosity, apologize, and ask for his immediate forgiveness! It worked! Because he had never yet opened the bottle, it was still sacred to him. Until he could do that, the piece of metal that injured him was now safe in that bottle and until he could get enough self-courage to open it, it was still the bogeyman that might still have the power to hurt him again.

### **Lesson Learned**

Give the utmost respect to war memorabilia that injured soldiers carry with them down from the evacuation hospitals. They are like sacred talismans to them. Don't ever forget your role as a chaplain. Show respect and interest to what is being shared with you, but don't open any more doors unless the patient opens them for you. In my case, I tried to unlock one of those doors myself, without invitation, and almost lost my credibility as a military chaplain with one soldier.

We both laughed about the whole thing after the impasse was breached and Paul and I became good friends. He was later evacuated to Germany where his family was stationed.

### **3. A Vulcan Tank Gunner**

PFC Jimmy L., age 20, had just finished Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training in August 1990 when he was sent to the Persian Gulf from Fort Hood, Texas. He was a Vulcan Tank gunner and received serious flak wounds from a bomblet that virtually landed in his lap before he could get his hatch closed on his Vulcan Tank. The ground war was in its second day (26 February 1991) when Jimmy and his Vulcan crew were caught out in the open during a multi-rocket missile launching. He was the last one to climb into the Vulcan and was trying to reach the hatch when he was injured.

Jimmy had been evacuated to our hospital from the front during the night and I saw him the next morning. He would face (like so many others) many surgeries at King Fahad Hospital before he would be shipped on to Germany. Jimmy is the first soldier whose youthfulness and innocence affected me. When I walked into Jimmy's room for the first time, he turned his head slowly over to look at me and his blond hair, blue eyes, and fair complexion bored a hole right through me. His right arm had more pins and screws in it than a model airplane wing. His legs had weights on both of them and I could tell he was uncomfortable. Like all the injured I met, he was proud of his Purple Heart but wanted to know if he could get back to his

unit soon. I had to inform him that the war was over for him by the looks of things and that he needed to concentrate on getting well again.

### **Lesson Learned**

The other four Chaplains could minister better to Jimmy than I could. His age and innocence was too close to my own two son's ages. It was the first time I could find a reason to identify with the old adage, "War Is Hell!" I began to hate war after that. I loved Jimmy like my own son and said to myself, "If this is the price of war, than war was not worth it." Jimmy got better and was evacuated to Germany two weeks later.

The morale and esprit de corps in the Persian Gulf War was remarkably strong. The American people, President Bush, and Congress are largely responsible for that. We were loved and well supported and we knew it. It made all the difference in the world to the average soldier.

### **4. A Communication Specialist**

Specialist Jack P., was a tall white male who was in his last year of enlistment when he was sent to the Persian Gulf. His wife and son were in Germany when he was accidentally injured. I say accidentally, because he was riding in the back of a truck during the first day of the ground war (25 February 1991) when the truck driver stopped at an innocent looking war souvenir, picked it up, and tossed it to Jack in the back of the truck. It was one of those now famous bomblets, about the size of a hand grenade, and when Jack caught it, it exploded in his hands and face. He had to have extensive surgery on the upper half of his torso and plastic surgery on his face. He probably will lose the sight of one eye.

Jack was unique to me because he used his strong faith as a means of denying his pain and present calamity. He would say to me, "Oh, I'm fine; Jesus removes the pain. God's told me I am going to make it. This is no big thing." The staff and everyone knew he was in complete denial and no one knew what to do about it. His denial turned to extreme anxiety, manipulation and domination of any health care worker who walked into his room. They turned to me for help. To compound the problem, Jack was sure that I, as his chaplain, would go along naturally with his needs. I could see that in order to help this soldier, I would have to eventually confront his actions. My problem was how to do it without hurting him even more. He was suffering physically but did I want to make him hurt even more emotionally? I have learned that the longer the inward man hurts, the longer it takes for the outward man to heal. (I must confess at first I tried to avoid the confrontation which I saw coming by claiming to the staff I was too busy. But in retrospect, what I was doing was steadying my nerves and inner spirit for what I knew I had to do. There were two psychiatrists between the two hospital units but they wanted me to do it because of the "religious talk" from the patient.)

Finally, the day came and Jack and I sat down. By now his IVs had been removed but his mouth was wired shut because of a broken jaw. I gently informed him what the staff was seeing in his behavior and it was getting on everyone's nerves. In time he saw it also and to draw his story to

a conclusion, his extreme anxiety came from over perfection and fear of failure he wouldn't be able to live up to what he felt God had called him to do once he was discharged from the Army. Several counseling sessions followed and Jack began to cooperate with his health care plan and he improved quickly and was soon sent on to Germany.

### **Lesson Learned**

Chaplains are a very viable part of the health care team. Man is embodied with a mind, body, and spirit. You cannot separate or ignore any one of the three without prolonging health care. In Jack's case, his spirit was even more damaged than his body, i.e., his expectations of what he felt God had called him to do was now interrupted by injury and long term recuperation. His spirit was literally wounded.

My own feelings were significantly important also. They ranged from anger to lack of patience. I was stretched in many areas I didn't want to be stretched in. I've since learned my enemy was my own unfounded fear. Once Jack and I began to talk, he helped me to grow along with him. This was a perfect example of what happens when the patient's history parallels the chaplain's history.

### **5. A Forward Artillery Scout**

PVT Orman P., was a forward artillery scout who got shot by a sniper in his head causing loss of brain tissue. (I have deliberately saved the best of my stories until last because Orman showed me the value of being an Army chaplain, or for that matter, a hospital chaplain in any hospital.)

Orman's name came to my attention on the Patient Admittance sheet shortly after the ground war had ended. It was 2 March 1991, and, as a habit, I began my evening rounds by visiting the Burn Unit and Intensive Care Units first. Orman immediately caught my attention in ICU #2 as I walked in because his entire head was bandaged. (Only seven years earlier, my oldest son went through the same ordeal from a brain tumor. I knew what this meant as I walked over to his bed.) The rails were up and the patient was in a deep coma, eyes glazed and fixed, and arms and legs moving incoherently with uncontrolled jerking. I looked closer at my patient sheet and it read, "gunshot wound to head." I began my pastoral care by slowing talking to Orman asking a few basic questions. (He could hear my voice but could not make sense of anything.) "There is still swelling," the doctor said, "and we don't give him much hope. Your prayers are greatly needed for this one, Chaplain," and the neurosurgeon left. I bent down alongside Orman's left ear and quoted the 91st Psalm, the 23rd Psalm, and the Lord's Prayer. I continued to do that for the next two weeks. Finally, on the day before Orman was going to be evacuated, I passed an ICU nurse in the hallway and she remarked, "Chaplain, I think Orman is trying to wake up. Why don't you go see him and try to talk to him. Maybe he will recognize your voice since you have seen him so often." I hurried to ICU. Along the way I prayed, "O God, please, please, spare Orman's life just like you did Duane's (my oldest son). He is too young to die. Please God, in Jesus name, Amen." Orman's eyes were



closed as I approached his bed. "He seems to be resting," I thought, "and I will try just one more time." I quoted the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer, but it wasn't until the latter that I felt a hand on my arm. Thinking it was a nurse with a message of some sorts, I ignored it because that had happened before. Upon the conclusion of my prayer, I looked down and it was Orman's hand! His trach kept him from talking but he didn't need to talk for what I saw was better than anything he could have said. His left thumb was sticking straight up giving me the "O.K." sign, just like my own son did seven years earlier. I told the other nurses to come over here for a minute. I said, with tears streaming down my face, "do you see that? Orman is getting better." Bedlam broke out in that room. You never saw so much happiness in all your life. Someone once said, "The Army is good for a laugh a minute." Here was one of those moments. Orman was evacuated to Frankfurt, Germany, the next day.

### **Lessons Learned**

I have learned never to take for granted the power of prayer and God's Word. In Orman's case, my scripture reading and prayers reminded him in his coma of some distant spiritual roots; of a mother, Sunday school teacher, father or pastor who cared enough for this young lad to take him to Sunday School and church. Sent to the Persian Gulf to defend freedom loving people everywhere, he fell an innocent prey to a sniper's bullet. Then at a time when he needed his God the most, an Army Chaplain happened to connect with his spiritual roots at the right time to bring him through his carnage.

I shall forever be humbled and grateful for God allowing me to be his servant, sent to Saudi Arabia to minister to young people like Orman, Jack, Jimmy, Paul and Samuel. I am grateful for our American way of life, for our Constitution that calls for Army Chaplains to serve with the Army and all the branches of the military, and for the lessons learned in my own life from Operation Desert Storm.

### **Redeployment - 12 March 1991 - 1ST Attempt To Go Home.**

- Today, we were told around 1000, that a plane was available to take the 382d home if we could be ready by 2300. Our Commander said we would take it, so everyone hurriedly packed and threw away all their home made furniture and excess food items. (Philippine refuse collectors were made happy!)
- 1300 - Message rescinded. A combat unit took our aircraft. The MEDCOM Commander, COL Tsouslos tasked the 382d to do unit out processing physicals on other units going home for the next two weeks.
- Most everyone is heart broken and angry. Many had called loved ones this morning and told them we would be home tomorrow.
- UMT was kept very busy today trying to soothe over hurt feelings. The young soldiers especially are restless and want to go home.
- 1800 - Commander has to address the unit! Chaplains offer prayer for patience and understanding. That helped to air feelings and now we realize



we would have had to have an aircraft tail number and would have to go through customs with the MPs.

## **13 - 22 March 1991**

- Heartbreaking to see Eskan Village becoming a “ghost town.” The 217th Evac Hospital from San Antonio left on the 7th; the 800 member 50th General Hospital left on the 15th (I had many friends in these units and now I am dealing with feelings of loneliness.)
- Surplus “freebies” everywhere for the taking. i.e. Paperback books, cosmetics of all kinds, canned food, enough suntan lotion to last a family of 4 spending everyday in the hot Florida sun for 10 years. I pack up a nice box full of things left behind by the 50th General and take it to my dry cleaner Egyptian friend who sells imported clothing. He gives me a skirt and blouse for my wife and 2 brass candle holders. Value \$75.00. (I try it the next day and he says no!)
- I try my best to keep busy and minister to the troops. I begin a weeks service of *Reunion* Seminars based on a new book given us this week by Chaplain (COL) Gay Hatler, titled, “*Reunion*”. Poor turn out. Several reasons:
- Curfew lifted. ARCENT allows soldiers access to Riyadh’s gold souks so everyone wants to go downtown.
- Parties, celebrations, dances going on at units still left.

## **22 March 1991 - Friday**

- 382d gets an aircraft tail number and departure date.
- Happiness everywhere!! Everyone packs furiously before MEDCOM can change their mind.
- Final dance, and unit party. (No beer or alcohol probably saved many from Article 15s!) I can’t say enough for the Saudis ban on alcohol. This is an outstanding example of the affects of prohibition for we had no fights and other social malaises that alcohol generates. (Drugs were also banned of course!)

## **23 March 1991 - Saturday**

- Restful day.

## **24 March 1991 - Sunday - 1100**

- The 382d joins the MEDCOM Chaplain (COL) Brock Watson at his ecumenical service at the Desert Sand tent next to the mess hall. It is our final service together.
- 2130 - In groups of 50, we are bussed along with our duffle bags, to a fixed MP site (a high rise underground auto parking garage) to go through customs. Contraband is as follows:
  - Desert sand (even on boots and shoes), ammunition, ordinance, Iraq weapons, bayonets, scorpions, food products, or agriculture products.

- I opened both duffle bags but all that the MP wanted to see was my boots/shoe bottoms which, at previous advice, was packed on top of duffle bag.
- Bags taken from us, loaded on pick-up and taken to 18 wheel flat-bed for delivery to airplane. (Would not see them again until Charleston, SC).
- Directed to third floor of high rise where cots were waiting. Popcorn and MREs were given to everyone.

## 25 March 1991 - Monday

- 0220 - Try to sleep. Too excited.
- 0500 - Board busses for trek to Riyadh Air Force terminal where an American Airlines DC-10 is waiting. Crew very excited about seeing us. Clap for us as we climb the stairs. You never saw so many happy people in all your life. Only one half of the 382 leave on this first flight. The other half will follow on Tuesday, 26 March 1991.
- Feelings/Reflections -
  - Around 25 people sick with fever, diarrhea, chills and cramps. Two just released from King Fahad hospital so they could go home. I am one of the sick. Take outside seat in row so I can get to latrine quickly!
  - I am the only chaplain on this flight. Chaplain (MAJ) T. Joe Lusk was asked by commander to travel on second. (Divine intervention!?)
  - Mixed feelings over leaving now. Angry because we didn't get Saddam Hussein. Sadness for a part of me is left behind in the Emergency Room and Trauma Wards of King Fahad where I ministered to the combat casualties. Loneliness for my Saudi and Philippine friends I met.
- Enroute to USA - 0922 - *Lift Off!*
  - During take off, my last look at a patriot battery crew standing guard even though the ground war ended less than a month ago. The crew waves to us while their missiles are still pointed high in the skies. I weep softly in gratitude for a "job well done!" I feel so proud to be an American, a soldier, a chaplain! I am going home. God Bless the USA.
  - Refueling stop in Milan, Italy. Rainy. Unbelievable security outside. Police everywhere. They know we are Desert Storm troops. They wave so proudly at us and give us thumbs up. Yellow ribbons seen on terminal's glass windows 50 yards away. Security Police carry Uzies as they check IDs of food catering crew.
  - Reality begins to dawn on me that the rumors we were hearing about how the American people felt about us must be true. Anticipation begins to build. "Lord, help me to get ready for all this!"

## 1700 - (New York Time) - 26 March 1991

- Kennedy Airport, American Airlines terminal. Refueling stop. We are allowed off aircraft to go inside terminal.
- Unbelievable, scary, embarrassed, . . . totally unprepared. The terminal burst into a thunderous applause and uproar. People everywhere rush over to greet us. A.A. has hot pizzas, sodas, music, balloons, yellow ribbons and

posters saying, "Welcome Home 382d", "Job Well Done!", "We Love You", on terminal walls.

- *Mood, Reflections, Feelings.*

- This is too much for me! I'm embarrassed, scared, delighted, emotionally overcome. I begin to weep profusely as I'm embraced by stranger after stranger. So this is what it is like to be a hero. But all I did was offer myself to free Kuwait and stop aggression so Kuwait can be free again.
- I have an urgent desire to want to be with those too sick to get off the aircraft. I sneak away quietly to minister to my sick soldiers still on the plane. Two will later be taken off the plane at Charleston, SC, and rushed to the Charleston Naval Hospital. I try to tell them what is happening inside the terminal. The words only get stuck in my throat. (My P.T.S.D., patient's stories at the VA hospital in Augusta come back to me. "Dear God", I pray. "Why... why... couldn't the American people do this for them?") "It feels so good to be loved and appreciated."
- My thoughts turn toward my wife and two sons. God how I miss them. Almost home... help me Lord to be just a little more patient.

## **1830 - Depart Kennedy Air Port      2000 - Arrive in Charleston, SC.**

- Small crowd but very appreciative of us. (I'm back in America again! Find *Playboy* magazine in men's room!)
- Major disappointment! Our busses not present to take us on to Augusta. One broke down earlier. Confusion over what time to pick us up.
- Ambulances take two very sick soldiers away. I jump on ambulance and offer prayer and comfort to them before they leave.
- 2300 - Still no busses. I call home. Wife told I was on the second flight. She hurries to get ready to meet me. Can't give her a definite time. She says she will be at the Fort Gordon Sports Arena by 0230, anyway.
- 2400 - Lay flat out on floor in terminal, along side two others. 16 hours flight time has made me weary in body and spirit. Fall soundly off to sleep... feels so good.

## **27 March 1991 - Wednesday - 0045**

- Awakened by Detachment Cdr., 45 minutes later to prepare to load busses. Try to shake off my sleep. Let's see now... "Where did I leave my duffle bags and ruck sack?" Pass through turnstiles. MPs want ammo anyone may still be carrying. MPs escort us off post to major highway.
- "Busses can't go fast enough... too bad they hired retired old men to drive us. I could drive a lot faster and safer than he is. Why can't he keep up with the busses in front of us?"

## **27 March 1991 - Wednesday - 0245**

- Busses regroup at Georgia Welcome Station off I-20. Six state police and Richmond County police cars escort us the next 15 miles to Fort Gordon.



“Streets are dark, no one cares . . . no one will meet us at Fort Gordon. How stupid! How could the Army do this to us. Late busses . . . Why couldn’t our plane fly from Kennedy into Bush Field at Augusta having us home by 2045? You wait til I see those responsible! I’ll speak my mind so our other half of the hospital won’t have to go through this tomorrow!”

## **27 March 1991 - Wednesday - 0330 - Arrival at Fort Gordon Sports Arena**

- “What are all those cars parked behind and around the building for? It’s late. They should be home in bed. (It’s 24 hours now since I’ve slept). I must be hallucinating. What’s that music I hear? All those voices in there. This can’t be real. I will wake up soon and find this all can’t be real.”
- 1ST Sergeant barking out orders. “Put your Load Bearing Equipment (LBE) on, soldiers.” “Fall in next to your position platoon leaders,” snaps another voice out of the dark. (The Mobilization Troop Command people are back).
- We then peel off by each platoon and march into the Field House. I am in the front row. The people stand and clap as we enter. American flags, posters and yellow ribbons everywhere. Tired, shocked and stunned. I try to find my wife through tears, shock and stain filled glasses. “Man, its hot in here. This can’t be for real. I’ll wake up soon.” We are called to attention for the *National Anthem*. Then MG Peter Kind says some words to us I am too tired to hear. I’ve spotted my wife and son. All I want is to hold her and my son in my arms. (My other son couldn’t stay up. He has college classes next day.)

## **0400 REUNION: FEELINGS AND REFLECTIONS**

- “Here she comes! O God, this is too good to be true! She is so beautiful, so precious. Thank you for my wonderful wife! Thank you God for bringing us all home safely. Thank you for protecting us over there. Thank you for the 382d, General Schwarzkopf, President Bush, my soldier friends, my family, the Chaplain’s Corps, my training. It all paid off, it was worth it all. I love you God. I love you so very much!”

## **0530 - Into Bed**

- Ecstasy! “Thank you God! Let me put this all behind me . . . Let me try to forget . . . Let me lose myself in sleep . . . Let me . . . Let me” . . . zzzzz

## **Epilogue**

- The 382d Field Hospital was off until 1700 the same day. We then met at Bush Field, Augusta, GA, to welcome home our second half. Again, another grand welcome ceremony, but much better planned than our half at 0300 this morning.
- After only a few hours rest, I am standing in formation at Bush Field when the DC-10 approached the terminal.



- *Feelings/Reflections:* I feel so proud of my city, Augusta, GA., as I look over the crowd. I sense the crowd's excitement as loved ones await the plane's door to open. The Army Band is playing, Augusta's hospitals are represented by banners and flags. "God, please don't ever let this spirit of patriotism go away. It is so healthy and good for America . . . for me . . . for my two sons to see!"
- The DC-10 door opens and here they come. After a few speeches, family members, spouses and children, rush toward us. "It's so good to be an American! To be home again. Thank you God! Thank you Augusta! Thank you for loving and caring so much for the 382d. We shall always serve you proudly. We love you as you love us!" Operation Desert Storm was a valuable experience for me. My story has only just begun. I have so much more locked in recesses of my heart and only time and pen will enable me to unlock them. I'm more reserved, quiet, and simple now in my aspirations and life style. War has a way of helping one put in perspective what is really important in life. I take time now to look more closely at a blade of grass or leaf. (They were scarce in the desert). I never could cry before but I don't have that difficulty any more. And lastly, I spend more time in prayer and God's Word praying for peace in the world. I am not sure yet what all this means, but in the processing of it all, I am a better chaplain. If Operation Desert Storm didn't accomplish any thing else, my being there was worth it to be a better hospital chaplain and God's servant.



## Forward Thrust

### Timothy K. Bedsole

The Unit Ministry Team (UMT) Handbook (RB 1-1) states, “The Army doctrine designed to provide effective religious support on the Air/Land Battlefield is called Forward Thrust.”

When I read these words in Chaplain Office Basic, I didn’t expect to apply the doctrine so early in my career. Less than six months after entering active duty, I found myself thrust into the middle of Operations Desert Shield and Storm. Doctrine became reality when my Chaplain Assistant, SPC Ronald Putt, and I found ourselves in the desert of Saudi Arabia and later on the plains of Iraq, ministering to wounded and dying soldiers. In July of 1990, I received an answer to three years of prayer. I would enter active duty on 26 September at Ft. Stewart, Georgia. Then came the second day of August and everything changed. Suddenly, the words of Paul seemed to come alive as he wrote in 2 Timothy 4:6 “I am now ready to be poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.” My departure time came on the 13th of October. I left my wife and children in Hinesville, GA and deployed to Saudi Arabia. Forward Thrust had begun.

### Prior To Engagement

I was assigned to the First Battalion of the 64th Armored Regiment, the “Rogue Force.” The Battalion was task organized with two mechanized infantry companies and two armored companies. Throughout the operation, we were joined by engineers, ground surveillance radar operators, fire support teams, psychological operations, and even Air Force Liaison personnel. Facilitating unit cohesion became an important part of nurturing the living. Forward Thrust depends on teamwork and teamwork depends on

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Chaplain (CPT) Timothy K. Bedsole, is the battalion chaplain for the 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 24th Infantry Division (MECHANIZED), Fort Stewart Georgia. This is his first assignment. He is endorsed by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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unity. As a chaplain, I felt obligated to welcome attached units to the task force and help integrate the soldiers into the combat team.

“Nurture the living” was the watch word of our UMT. We worshipped, encouraged, cried, and grew with the soldiers. Even though this time seemed like an eternity in the desert, God added water and grew us into a UMT.

Nurture the living was easily accomplished since I lived, ate, and slept among the soldiers of our unit. This 24 hour a day, 7 days a week, ministry of presence allowed relationships with soldiers to develop that would have taken much longer in garrison. Our living area eventually was located in the Battalion recreation center. It allowed for maximum contact with soldiers as they spent a portion of their free time at the recreation center. We traveled to company areas, providing personal counsel and developing relationships, while I learned the mission of our unit.

Nurture the living included counseling soldiers who found themselves questioning their relationships with God, with spouses, and with each other. Some grew closer to God while others seemed to turn away. We offered words of encouragement and hope for frustrated soldiers. Over and over feelings of abandonment and the approaching apocalypse invaded the minds of the soldiers of the task force.

## **During Engagement**

Relief, excitement, and fear swept our emotions as we prepared to enter the ground war. Months of preparation and weeks of waiting ended on the 24th of February. We spent the night moving to the border of Iraq and joined with one of our mechanized Infantry companies poised for the imminent attack. This would be our home for the next two weeks. I was thankful for the many personal relationships I’d developed with the units. My “dues” were paid earlier when the commanders, first sergeants, and myself all developed a respect for the role we each would play. These relationships aided me in providing ministry. Care for the casualties is the priority of the UMT during the battle. My opportunity to practice what we preach came on the 27th of February. It was a morning I will not soon forget. Our UMT developed what we called the UMT Spiritual Assistance Plan for mass casualties. We implemented the plan at the Battle of Jalibah Airfield. The plan basically provided for a spiritual triage ministry. My assistant performed the spiritual triage and I supplied the spiritual ministry.

The airfield was prepped with artillery earlier that morning. For three days we had road-marched 370 kilometers in a lightning thrust. Later, I was told we moved more equipment at a faster pace and a further distance than General Patton had done in his move across Europe. We felt every mile of it. Ministry became a brief prayer and a word of encouragement when we stopped for refueling or to allow artillery to prep areas. Being at such a high level of readiness did not allow for long term ministry when we stopped. Our main task was to stay alive to minister. A question occurred: had I located the UMT in the right place within the task force configuration? My answer came quickly.



The UMT rode with one of the two battalion aid stations (BAS) attached to each mechanized unit traveling on the outside flanks in a task force diamond. Each of these aid stations consisted of one M 577, a "split level" personnel carrier, two M 113 personnel carriers, used as ambulances, and one HMMV used to carry trauma and decontamination equipment. Due to the limited space on each track my assistant and I rode separate tracks. I rode in the aid station vehicle and my assistant rode in a M 113. There was no jump aid station as both stations traveled until they received casualties. They would then stop, treat, and MEDEVAC casualties. "Stick and move" is what the medics called it. Locating with the aid stations allowed me to know where and when casualties came in and provide ministry for them.

As the task force began the attack we followed a mechanized company to within one kilometer of the objective. Mortar and artillery fire rocked the ground around us and my prayer life grew quickly as I simply asked God to give me strength and wisdom for the battle. We watched in horror as a Bradley took a hit and exploded. The radio was immediately flooded with calls for medical attention. Our BAS group retreated about 1 kilometer and set up to receive casualties, but it was the other BAS that would receive the casualties that day. Had I missed the opportunity I wondered? Suddenly, a call for help came over the radio. My assistant was dispatched with the medic vehicle in which he was riding to go to the aid of the other BAS. They had taken in 11 casualties, 4 were critical. I prayed for SPC Putt and the others as he crossed the battlefield to render assistance. Forward Thrust took on new meaning as I watched our UMT on the battlefield. My forward thrust became an upward thrust of prayer. Then came the call. The voice of "Doc" Poole, our Battalion surgeon, called out, "Six-zero PA, this is Six-zero Doc, over." "Six-zero Doc, this is six-zero PA, over" answered Chief Lafferty, our battalion physician's assistant. "Six-zero PA, we need the chaplain."

Those words were forever etched in my heart, "...we need the chaplain." After this day there is no doubt in my mind of the need of military chaplains.

I quickly rode across the battlefield to provide the ministry to the wounded. Upon my arrival I entered an outdoor emergency room filled with young soldiers. SPC Putt had done his job well. He quickly pointed me to the casualties which needed my attention. The Doc told me we had four amputees and several other severely burned casualties. I began with the amputees. Kneeling by each one I prayed and spoke words of encouragement. I spoke to them of God and of things eternal. One soldier asked me to read the 23rd Psalm. I could hardly read. Activities seemed to stop and I could hear the voices of medics and wounded soldiers join in as I read, "yea though I walk through the valley of death I will fear no evil for you are with me." Those words seemed to bring comfort to all the wounded and the caregivers.

Young men spoke of dying and the fear it caused. Some cursed! Others cried! Some were just silent. More casualties came in and I moved from litter to litter praying for each one. A group of Iraqis approached our area and a security force was established using even the wounded. We were

unsure of their intentions, but, thankfully they only wanted to surrender. An Iraqi casualty was brought in. I gave him water and in a crude sign language I asked him if he'd like for me to pray with him. I'll never forget his reaction: he kissed the back of my hand. War could not separate the desire of two men to call upon God for strength. Our faith was different but our need the same.

Finally, after what seemed like hours we evacuated our casualties. We lost two soldiers that day for which my heart was grieved. Yet, I was glad that God allowed me the privilege of ministry on the cutting edge of Forward Thrust. I was there to comfort the wounded and dying soldiers. There can be no doubt in my mind I was in the right position both tactically and spiritually. I left the battlefield that day, but I will never leave behind the memories and the feelings of ministry on the battlefield.

After the battle I was able to visit the company which had taken the most casualties. The UMT split up and went track to track counseling and praying with the soldiers who were filled with anger and hurt over the loss of their friends.

## After Engagement

After the engagement it was time to honor the dead. During a lull the next day I visited again with the company which had experienced the heaviest casualties. I found a group of soldiers ready for participation in a worship service. Readiness still being a factor, we held a simple memorial service with the two platoons that suffered the most casualties at Jalibah. Crouched between a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and berm with burning Iraqi vehicles in the background we began. It was a simple service consisting of singing *Amazing Grace*, a reading from Psalm 23, and a few words spoken to bring hope. We could have said or sang anything for I feel we all just wanted an excuse to let out emotions. We needed reminding of the hope of eternal life.

When soldiers die, those left behind become the living casualties. In some sense, honoring our fallen comrades comforted and helped heal the living. It becomes a release and a time to refocus on the meaning of life. When we later held a battalion memorial ceremony the healing continued and widened as the burden was shared by the group. What looks like a lot of pomp and ceremony suddenly took on a new meaning as we gave tribute to those who paid the highest price for freedom.

## Conclusion

My part of honoring the dead continued with my return to the United States. I was able to visit with the mother of one of our soldiers who was killed in action. Her questions to me brought home the need of Forward Thrust doctrine for the UMT. She asked, "Chaplain, did my son hear about God out there?" and "Did he know God?" I could not answer the latter question since, ultimately, only God knows the eternal destiny of a person's soul, but I could answer the former. Her son heard about God. Her son heard of God through a UMT applying Forward Thrust doctrine to bring the presence of

God into the hell of battle. The answer comforted a grieving mother. Her concern was not with doctrine but with presence. She misses the presence of her only son, but is comforted by the hope brought through God's only son, Jesus Christ.

How far forward should the UMT locate in battle is still measured by the mission of the unit, but in my heart I know this UMT was positioned in the right place for the ministry of presence at a critical time. Army doctrine established the guidelines but God allowed the ministry.





## Adaptability, the Hallmark of All Things

Charlotte Hunter

The Saudi sun shone brightly as I stood on the runway tarmac. To my left yawned the huge jaw of a C-5A transport, out of which my cramped legs had just carried me. Young Marines bustled about unloading pallets of seabags and ALICE packs while I and the 57 other sailors who had flown with me from Norton AFB blinked at the sight of a mosque minaret next to the airport terminal and marvelled at the numbers of helicopters, C-5As, and C-130s that surrounded us, unloading *vast* quantities of boxes and equipment. Behind us, very close to the runway, two tanks kept menacing vigil over an endless horizon of sand. The senior officer in our little group conferred earnestly with a harassed-looking Marine, who waved his clipboard in the direction of the tanks. We picked up our small personal bags and set off along the edge of the runway, with each step feeling the unfamiliar and awkward bump of the gas masks on our hips.

Less than two weeks earlier I certainly did not anticipate that a drab vinyl and rubber mask would become my closest friend for a couple of months, nor would I have guessed that I would feel a sense of real loss when finally forced to turn my SCUD companion back into supply. Of course, two weeks earlier I was unaware that my name had come up on the list of those chaplains destined to spend a few months' in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm. In the midst of what I had planned would be a brief courtesy call on the USMC Chaplain, the news was announced in hearty tones of congratulation.

"Hey there, Charlotte! We're sending you off to the sandbox! Can you be ready to go in three days? Boy, I'll bet you're excited . . ."

Excited? Stunned was more like it. As I trudged along the sandy edges

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LT Charlotte Hunter, CHC, USNR, is chaplain to the USS EMORY S. LAND, (AS-39) a submarine tender. She is a graduate of Boston University, and is a Christian Science minister. This article is reprinted with permission from the U.S. Navy Chaplain Resource Board publication *The Navy Chaplain*, volume 5 number 3.

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of the Jubail runway with my fellow travelers, sweating in the heat of the midday, worrying about how I would carry my hefty equipment to wherever I was going, and wondering anxiously WHERE I was going, the shock had not yet worn off. Saudi Arabia? Of all the places to end up in . . .

## The Setting

When I first saw it on 22 January 1991, the Third Marine Air Wing (MAW) Command Post, located near the Jubail airport in Saudi Arabia, consisted of a neatly laid-out arrangement of dust-covered, dark green tents behind a high, chainlink fence in the midst of a vast desert. Sandbags surrounded every tent, piled two or three feet high. Between many of the tents, sandbag bunkers nestled protectively; some had carefully decorated signs at the entrance proclaiming the “SWA Waldorf Astoria” or some such thing. Certain tents hid their purpose under heavy drapes of camouflage netting, surrounded on all sides by rusting concertina wire that snatched at the unwary wanderer who ventured out on moonless or cloudy nights without a flashlight. From the supporting ropes of other tents, plainly living spaces, laundry collected sand as it dried in the sun. Around the camp perimeter small clusters of white metal portajohns placed at strategic intervals dismally proclaimed the plumbing conditions.

Dust blew everywhere and into everything in an unceasing swirl of sand. The weather was cold. Not chilly, but COLD. Being inexperienced in the ways of deployment and war, and already irritated at having to carry a heavy cot strapped to my seabag as well as what felt like 200 pounds of other military gear, I had repudiated the field jacket and liner the supply folks at Camp Pendleton had tried to press upon me only two days earlier. Saudi Arabia was desert, for heaven’s sake. What could I possibly want with a heavy, bulky field jacket? The arctic desert winds that pierced my thin stealth jacket for the next two months were miserable rebukes to my hastiness.

I settled into one of the large GP tents along with seven other women. Each of us staked out a small area for ourselves, and over time we developed friendships and routines that made life bearable. It says much for the cooperative spirit in our group that the biggest hurdle we faced in our months together was working out the schedules for hanging our laundry on the indoor line that ran the length of the tent . . . and on which we all nearly strangled ourselves doing the 0300 SCUD-alert dashes. Our tent leaked profusely, but not as badly as some. It provided no insulation against the intense cold at night and quickly turned into an oven on the few sunny days we experienced. But it was home.

Adaptability in all things was the hallmark of this deployment. One adapted, or . . . or nothing. There were no alternatives. One learned to live, for example, with the hideous smells of the Honey Wagon as it made its daily rounds to clean the portajohns. Lacking irons, one learned the cot method of pressing a uniform—carefully laying it out flat underneath the foam pad and sleeping bag on one’s cot and then sleeping on it for several nights. I, normally the vainest of creatures, quickly abandoned makeup and

hair glaze . . . they draw flies. The endlessly blowing sand and the frequently missed showers also persuaded me to submit my lengthening tresses to the severe tonsorial skills of RP1 Robin Holdren, who worked in a nearby camp. Photos take of me in Saudi—and I plan to burn them all—show a plain, shorn, bedraggled-looking woman in a wrinkled uniform looking, as my mother might say, as though she walked backward through a bush. Some adaptations—of the ego kind—were very difficult.

My gas mask was on my hip or by my side at all times, whether preaching or teaching, giving communion or counseling. Each night I placed it, along with my boots, flak jacket, and MOP gear, in a neat row next to my cot in that order. When the inevitable sirens wailed in the dark, I rolled out of my cot reaching for and slipping on my MOP gear as I joined my tentmates in the dash for the bunkers. One seldom-mentioned benefit of those SCUD alerts was the great familiarity we all acquired with the beauties of the winter constellations in the Saudi night sky, as seen through plastic lenses. Good prayer time, too. The faith renewal benefits of these alerts became clear to me on the first day of the ground war, when RP3 Allgood and I realized that we had somehow both left our gas masks behind when we went off to a camp several miles away to do Sunday services. This didn't really bother either of us too much until, on the trip home, the sirens began their dreadful wail in each camp we passed. All through that long drive Marines in gas masks waved to us frantically, pointing to their masks; we just drove faster and prayed harder.

The toughest adaptation for me was getting used to the almost total lack of privacy, both personal and professional. My tentmates and I all worked different hours, ensuring that one was seldom if ever alone in the tent. The chaplains' office was crammed with small desks and a table at which six people—three chaplains and three RPs—struggled to find private space. A rough partition hid my workspace from the others, and during counseling sessions I encouraged the RPs and other chaplains to talk together or turn up the radio so that my counselees and I could enjoy some admittedly minimal privacy. By far the majority of my counseling took place outside, during walks around the camp or on the roads outside the fence. Because of our noncombatant status, we chaplains could not be alone even on a short drive outside our camp. While I was frequently grateful for the reassuring presence of the RPs and their weapons, especially when our journeys took us north toward the Kuwait border, I also distinctly remember the day, about a week after the ceasefire, when I was able to drive the twelve miles into the town of Jubail in splendid, gleeful solitude, alone for practically the first time in two months. I made that trip last as long as possible.

The setting and accommodations may have been unappealing initially—well, let's be honest: they were *never* appealing—but the crew in the chaplains' office was just the opposite. Chaplain Norm Williams was the Third MAW chaplain (and, therefore, my boss), and Chaplain Jerry Phelps took care of MWHS-3 and a MAGC-38. RPCS Romeo Gumboc exercised cheerful control over us chaplains, ably assisted by RP3 Richard Allgood and RPSA Hal McKinley. I was assigned as the Ops & Training chaplain for



Third MAW and, with barely time to catch my breath much less catch up on jet-lagged sleep, I was swept up into a highly charged and eye-opening wartime ministry.

## Lessons of Necessity

The camp commandant supplied us with a large utility tent to serve as the Third MAW chapel, and the maintenance people had strung five 60-watt lightbulbs at long intervals along the tent's inside peak. Their small light was lost in the vastness of the tent, and at first we nearly went blind trying to read scriptures and our sermon notes during services. There was no altar, no pulpit or lectern, no benches. All around the camp, however, were piles of scrap lumber and plywood that had been used by the Seabees to construct the hard-sided tents and other comforts and necessities in our camp. Chaplains Williams and Phelps—talented carpenters both—had only to see a piece of scrap wood to begin instantly comparing ideas on how best to use it, and when they weren't preaching or visiting they were exploring the marvelous treasure troves of cast-off bits and pieces that lay around. Old nails were carefully pulled out of wood and saved, tools were scrounged and begged and borrowed, and a large corner of our office tent provided storage for the salvaged materials. The sound of hammering rang out in our chapel as often as prayer, and a bare utility tent was transformed into a proper chapel. Neat rows of sturdy benches awaited our congregants, and at the back end of the tent stood a lectern with a hooded light. A kneeler faced the altar, and a very large and impressively solid cross hung on ropes on the back wall. Chaplain Phelps had devised the cross in such a way that it could be easily raised or lowered on ropes, making our chapel accessible and acceptable to all faiths. Tackling the challenge of devising a cruciform for our Roman Catholic congregants, Chaplain Phelps returned to the scrap piles. Spying some discarded rebar, he gathered it up and paid a visit to the adjacent Seabee camp. Out of this humble material, using a design that he sketched out, a helpful Seabee welder constructed a work of art. Three nails were pounded into the large chapel cross, and from them a striking impressionist figure of Christ crucified gazed upon the many masses conducted at Third MAW.

The rapid growth of our congregation as the air war intensified and the anticipated ground war grew nearer soon necessitated the addition of another utility tent onto the first. A chapel no longer, we became the proud custodians of a cathedral—with cathedral-like acoustical problems that even the booming voice of Chaplain Williams could not overcome. This, combined with the thundering take-offs of F-18As only a few hundred yards away, threatened to play havoc with all our services. Something had to be done. The solution to our problems came to Chaplain Williams in the night, and he bounded into the office one morning, excitedly waving a scrap of paper on which was sketched a pulpit modeled after those one frequently sees in older churches, raised pulpits over which hung acoustic domes to carry even the weakest voice throughout a church in pre-amplified times. My interest in carpentry has never extended much beyond the merely polite,



and I left him and Chaplain Phelps discussing measurement and material details. I returned several hours later to find it completed. The discovery of large sheets of sturdy plywood discarded by the Seabees had set my two colleagues happily hauling, cutting, pounding, and creating monumental clouds of dust in the office and in the chapel. The result was truly magnificent: a raised platform surrounded by slightly-over-waist high rails—very handy for gripping or leaning on during intense sermon moments—a slanted podium board at the front large enough for Bible and sermon notes was surmounted by a hooded light, and two shelves provided storage below the podium board. A solid plywood sheet rose up at the back, angling into an overhead sounding board that stretched across the entire pulpit. Each of us took turns stepping up into this imposing structure while the others raced to the tent entrance to hear the voices ringing out clearly through the entire length of the tent.

Our cathedral was not the only beneficiary of the Williams and Phelps carpentry skills. Third MAW chapels and chapel offices from southern Bahrain to northern Saudi Arabia were graced with lecterns (one made to fold for easy portability), benches, bookshelves, desks, tables, and chests of drawers—eloquent testimony to the busy, skillful hands that made ministry in a challenging environment much more comfortable than it might otherwise have been.

The scattering of units throughout the SWA theatre, sometimes far from their command posts, dictated that we chaplains provide area coverage rather than limit ourselves to narrow unit coverage. Where the opportunity and the need existed for ministry, we ministered. A few miles from our encampment, for example, at the other end of the Jubail airport runway, the USAF established units charged with receiving and transporting all the anticipated Marine casualties during the ground war. An officer approached me one day in the local telephone bank. Her people, she said, were anxious to hold services and to be able to talk with a chaplain, yet the nearest USAF chaplain was many miles away and unable to visit them. Could we help? So, in addition to visiting our own and many other Marines in the area, we adopted 350 airmen and women. I conducted Protestant services in their camp each Sunday and arranged regular Roman Catholic services as well. Chaplain Williams and Chaplain Phelps, along with Chaplain Jon Cutler, the sole rabbi serving with the Marines in SWA, often came visiting with me, prepared to meet the spiritual needs of any who requested help. No permanent chapel area could be established in the Air Force camp as hospital beds and litters were constantly being set up, or rearranged, or taken down, so our services shifted from place to place each week. Sometimes I had an altar—one week a wheeled litter, the next week a cardboard box, or a medicine cabinet—and my congregants, who also included members of the small Royal Air Force contingent encamped at Jubail airport, crowded together on the litters or dangled their feet from atop beds. Each day, it seemed, the number of anticipated Marine casualties that would be coming through these units rose higher and higher, the stress quickly reached critical mass. Much of my time was spent walking through the USAF work and living spaces, listening and comforting and sometimes distracting the warri-

ors with a game of Scrabble or cribbage. RP3 Allgood proved a vital ally in my work. An enormously gregarious soul, he made many friends throughout the Air Force encampment and more than once was able to steer me in the direction of need among this large group.

Lightweight, easily portable hymnals for use in the services we conducted all over the SWA theatre were in short supply—the heavy Armed Forces hymnals simply were not designed for easy transport in the field—and an alternative had to be found. Normal supply channels had proved of no avail. One day, however, while visiting the office of another chaplain in a nearby camp, I spied a box of about 40 small paperback hymnals/devotionals, perfect for the roving chaplain with limited space and lifting capability. Now, I knew that this chaplain held all his services in one place in the camp and used the Armed Forces hymnal. I also knew that neither he nor his RP were likely to part with these small books voluntarily. Here and now, before the entire Navy Chaplain Corps, I accept full blame for the fact that these small paperback hymnals found a new (unauthorized) home at Third MAW headquarters, where they proved enormously helpful in our wandering ministries. And I trust that one day Chaplain Lloyd Scott and RP1 Holden—and the Almighty—will forgive me my larceny.

We sponsored and supported a wide variety of chapel programs in our camp and in the camps surrounding us. Praise services, Bible studies, and morning devotionals occupied a good bit of our time throughout each week. We were blessed, moreover, by the presence of committed individuals who worked hard at expanding and enhancing the Command Religious Program. RPSA McKinley, for example, singlehandedly put together and directed a superb gospel choir that, without the aid of printed music or musical accompaniment, uplifted us all Sunday after Sunday. Officers and enlisted alike swelled the ranks of the choir and practiced the often challenging arrangements for long hours at night. Our camp security force—in real life the USMC band from El Toro—provided a soloist to play on special occasions. Our camp's Jewish lay leader, a young woman Marine officer, proved an outstanding advocate of and minister to our small and strongly committed Jewish community. The advent of Chaplain Cutler in theatre greatly expanded the opportunities for Jewish worship and study and added a welcome dimension among the chaplain ranks. His attempts to prove to RP1 Holdren, and RP3 Allgood and me that he could drive a stick shift Honda Accord across the 12-km causeway going from Saudi Arabia to Bahrain afforded us, and the Saudi and Bahraini customs officials all along the causeway, with one of the most hilarious hours in our stay. Other Third MAW chaplains, like chaplains throughout SWA kicked into ministerial high gear during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. My job as Ops and Training chaplain allowed me to visit Chaplains Abelson and Baker in Bahrain, on a couple of occasions; each time I left feeling exhausted just listening to the number and variety of chapel programs and services these two men provided for the men and women entrusted to their pastoral care.

The ceasefire brought about a marked, and not unexpected, reduction in participation in religious services. The morning devotionals in our camp and at the USAF camp ceased to exist within a few days; as this allowed me

an extra half-hour sleep in the mornings, I didn't see the scaledown as a wholly sad development.

The ministry of all the chaplains was successful because we shared the experiences of the people we served. We endured the same hardships, the same loneliness and longing to go home, the same fears about war. We huddled in bunkers at night and wondered, with our troops, if this was the night a SCUD would crash down upon us. We watched the black, oily clouds of Kuwaiti fires obscure the sun and shivered in the man-made chill of those days. We ate the same dreadful food, waited for mail call, rejoiced over news from home and shared it with those around us. As a family we made do, bearing the challenges and rejoicing in the many blessings that came our way, and as a family we came through this trying time.





Ch (MAJ) Robert G. Leroe, visiting an American hero at the 4th Task Force DEPMEDS at Objective Romeo, Iraq. Photo taken by 2LT Beuchane (Hospital S-1)



## Ready For The Storm

**Robert G. Leroe**

While the military was preparing for war, I was in the midst of Clinical Pastoral Education at Brooke Army Medical Center. As events transpired, I became increasingly convinced that God wanted me to serve in the Gulf. About a month before the war began, I wrote the Chief of Chaplain's Office requesting an assignment to a combat support hospital, which would enable me to utilize the skills I'd acquired from CPE. When the war began, my training was terminated and within a week I and my fellow CPE residents were at Fort Knox's Central Replacement Center en route to the Gulf.

We departed with uncertainty about the future but trusting God for protection. We also had the prayer support of family, friends, and our churches. At CPC we began to counsel soldiers who were also readying for Desert Storm.

Upon our arrival in Saudi Arabia we received pinpoint assignments. To my delight I learned that I was to report to the 28th CSH (44th Med Bde), from Fort Bragg, and located at logbase Charlie, 6 miles from the Iraqi border. The 28th was in charge of a medical Task Force consisting of units from throughout the US, formed into a huge deployable hospital complex, or DEPMEDS. As the Task Force chaplain, I was to coordinate the religious support and phased deployment of four Unit Ministry Teams.

I was warmly welcomed by the hospital staff and began working with Ch (CPT) Steve Hokana to determine the needs of hospital personnel, compile resources, plan training, and prepare for battlefield ministry. Steve already had an effective religious program in place. Worship services and Bible studies were well-attended, and UMTs had a heavy counseling load; they were ready for reinforcements. Just prior to my arrival the 28th

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Ch (MAJ) Leroe served with the 28th Combat Support Hospital during Desert Storm. He recently completed Clinical Pastoral Education at Brooke Army Medical Center and is now assigned to Letterman Army Medical Center, the Presidio of San Francisco. Ch (MAJ) Leroe is a minister with the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

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received a chaplain assistant fresh from training, PVT Larry Chalcraft, who was eager to serve God and country. With the entire task force UMT, plus support from the 24th ID, we had weekly Catholic, Protestant (liturgical & non-liturgical) and Jewish coverage.

While waiting for the word to move out, we taught classes to medical personnel on death and dying, mass casualty patient care, inner healing resources, and bioethics. Our class topics led to informal discussions regarding the human element of health care. Those in the people-helping professions can function in a dispassionate (cold, detached) manner, or be so empathized (ardent, emotional) that they become incapacitated. We determined that the balanced posture is one of compassion, which we defined as sensing the needs of others with a hands-on response offering healing and wholeness. We found great comfort in knowing that Christ is our companion in suffering and has called us to reflect His compassion.

Our hospital had over 20,000 body bags boxed up and ready for use. We were praying that we wouldn't need many of them. At the conclusion of a death & dying class, our head nurse passed one around, a chilling and vivid way of allowing the reality of war to sink in. Some soldiers were using body bags as sleeping bag covers. A nurse zipped one up all the way, only to discover that, unlike a sleeping bag, these bags had no zipper on the inside. With great effort he eventually freed himself, and later had us laughing with the story of his struggle.

A few weeks before the ground war began, one of our physicians was killed in a vehicle accident on Tapline road, a treacherous 2-lane highway. The others who were in the vehicle were seriously injured and were evacuated. The somberness of this tragedy was heightened when, several hours later, what remained of the vehicle was towed onto our compound. The doctor who died was extremely well-liked, and our troops were visibly shaken, many openly weeping. Perhaps the grim presence of the wrecked vehicle helped us to release our grief and to prepare for the awful reality of war. Many had been referring to Desert Storm as an "exercise." At the memorial service, Steve and I expressed hope in the midst of our painful loss.

We had very few "Medical Deities" with us. Our doctors freely expressed concern for their ability to handle the enormous number of casualties we anticipated. We all wondered about our limitations and how we would perform.

When the ground war finally began, the mood on our compound was that of relief, that we were going to do our mission and return home. Our confidence was not merely in our weapon systems and certainly not in our human abilities. The book of Psalms came alive for us in the desert, and brought us assurance of success: "It was not by their sword that they won the land . . . it was Your right hand, Your arm (44:3); "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God" (20:7); "He trains my hands for battle . . . You give me Your shield of victory" (18:34-35).

We loaded our equipment into a 170-vehicle convoy and deployed about a hundred miles into Iraq in support of the 24th ID. Our destination

was Objective Romeo, just south of the Euphrates river. The night before we arrived, our first night in Iraq, our “convoy through hell” encountered the awesome power of God. A “shemal” halted us, pummeling us with rain, dust, and hurricane-force winds. The intensity of the storm was so great that vehicles huddled together for fear of tipping over. We all agreed later that the night we spent atop uncovered vehicles was the most miserable of our lives.

As soon as we arrived at Romeo we began setting up our hospital. And as soon as we were ready to receive wounded, the first casualties arrived. The incoming helicopters bearing injured Allied soldiers sent an electric jolt throughout the hospital. Adrenaline flowed as staff scurried to receive their first battlefield patients. Chaplain assistants served as litter bearers, extending ministry to patients and staff. UMTs did not have to wait for “down time” to perform ministry. Had we not been present when things were busiest, the staff would have gone looking for us.

UMTs helped the staff to process the trauma of our combat casualties. Hospital personnel needed to express the intense emotions they felt. Late one night I sat with a group in the OR during a lull in the action, listening as individuals unburdened themselves.

One of the first patients I spoke to was a young soldier from New York with shrapnel wounds, but whose more serious injuries were far deeper. He had seen two of his buddies die, and he poured out his anger and hurt to me as he awaited treatment. I listened and prayed with him for comfort and healing. Later, Steve and I conducted a brief memorial service for the two dead soldiers. We recited Scripture and prayed over the remains of these two, tucked into body bags.

Our hospital received over 400 casualties, most of which were EPWs (enemy prisoners of war). They were astonished to learn that they were still in Iraq. They assumed that they had been evacuated to Saudi. They also assumed that we would mistreat them. They soon experienced grace in action, and were grateful for the care they received. They recognized the insignia of our chaplains and, though Muslim, were comforted by our presence. We smiled and greeted them with “Salaam alechem” (peace be with you) and helped feed those unable to feed themselves. The hospital staff regarded the wounded Iraqi soldiers with pity, considering them the victims of a cruel dictator. Most of them spoke some English, and as one was being led into surgery he announced to us, “Saddam is a dog!”

The hospital staff repeatedly expressed how fulfilling our experience was. Some felt guilty for enjoying the war. While none of us wished to see people suffer, it was rewarding to have the opportunity to alleviate that suffering. One of the doctors remarked that the idle months of waiting in the desert now seemed worthwhile.

Our Protestant, Catholic and Jewish services became occasions of celebration, and were marked by rejoicing and also prayers for both allied and enemy slain. Our Gospel choir jubilantly sang “Soon We’ll Be Home.”

There seemed to be few “foxhole conversions”; for one thing, we lacked foxholes! Fear did not bring many to faith, yet faith did cast out our fear. The soldiers I saw were confident in the overwhelming might of the



allied forces, and were too busy to be afraid. Yet many new prayers were heard in heaven, and many soldiers of Desert Storm began a living relationship with God through this experience. The solitude of our desert environment drew many to seek God's presence, peace, and power. Just as God led His prophets into the wilderness to get in touch with themselves and to seek higher resources, He used the time and isolation of our situation to cause us to consider the deep issues of life. Soldiers were seeking God, many seriously reading the Bible for the first time. They sought out our UMTs to receive guidance as to how they might grow in their understanding of God.

As the war came swiftly to a close, soldiers began asking for counsel as they prepared for another storm. They were about to return home to uncertain relationships. Mail was slow, and we were uncertain as to the condition of our loved ones. I assured soldiers that God could take better care of our families in our absence than we could in our presence. I also explained that the quality of our communication during a separation can determine the quality of one's relationship upon one's return.

The outcome of any battle rests not on our ability but on the power of God. I found great comfort in discovering II Chronicles 32:7-8, words of encouragement to others who faced an enemy army: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and the vast army with him; for there is one greater with us than with him. With him is only the arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles." The Lord God made us ready for the storm.





Protestant Worship at Task Force 4, Logbase Charlie (specifically, our fine choir); photo taken by Ch (MAJ) Robert G. Leroe



Ch (CPT) Jim Bowman with one of the first US casualties. Photo taken by Ch (MAJ) Robert Leroy

## Lessons from the Desert

### Dennis F. Bishop

The expanse of the desert spread out in front of me. Endless, featureless, except for stones. And silent. In the Christian faith the desert has traditionally been the place where one goes to confront self, and to find God. I was in the midst of a desert experience.

The 547th Medical Company (Clearing) from Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia was consolidating at Log Base Charlie. It was the 12th of March 1991, the ground phase of Operation Desert Storm was completed. I had been part of a platoon-sized element which had been attached for operations to the 41st Combat Support Hospital from San Antonio, Texas. We had supported the 24th Infantry Division's drive into southern Iraq, and had established the northern-most hospital in the theater of operations, just 50 miles from Basra. Our part in the war was over. We were now reconstituting for convoy to port.—And home.

In the meantime we were to do what soldiers do often. We had to wait. With many of the pressures and stresses now relieved it was a good time to assess what had happened. For me it was a time to look at the chaplain's role in a medical task force, and to consider lessons learned.

### “Chaplain, I'm afraid.”

I had been attending a year of residency training in Clinical Pastoral Education at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. When the air phase of Operation Desert Storm had begun, the Chief's office terminated training and ordered the residents deployed. Four other chaplains and I

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Chaplain (Captain) Dennis Francis (“Frank”) Bishop is an ordained clergyman in the United Church of Christ (Order of Corpus Christi), and an Episcopal layman. He is currently completing C.P.E. at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. On completion of training he will be assigned to Silas B. Hays Army Community Hospital, Fort Ord CA, as the Chief of the Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care.

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found ourselves on our way to Saudi Arabia via the Continental Replacement Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

My pilgrimage to my unit of attachment took me first to the port of Dammam. Then thru replacement centers to the 547th at Log Base Charlie, just six miles from the Iraqi border in the 18th Airborne Corps corridor. There both the 547th and the 41st waited.

I observed soldiers and medical professionals waiting. And on seeing them I became acutely aware of a reality. I and the other task force chaplains were the only ones not waiting to do our jobs. We were working every day. And I found I had been doing my job from the moment I departed San Antonio. At every stop someone would see my cross. And I heard the inevitable words, "Chaplain, do you have a minute?"

The soldiers spoke of families left behind, and concern for them. They spoke of their feelings about having to do their jobs. And they spoke of the thing we all had in common: fear. In many ways soldiers of all ranks and specialities said the same thing, "Chaplain, I'm afraid." And they would ask how to rid themselves of fear.

I was afraid, too. I had arranged for my funeral if it was needed. I had left my material and financial welfare in the hands of my mother and brother. I had only two duffel bags and a Rucksack to my name. And I wondered with the others around me if I would return.

The environment of war was unreal, otherworldly. There was fear and a lot of anger. There was a form of shock: people had been dislodged from their lives and thrown into a form of chaos. I was part of this environment. And I faced the same dilemma other chaplains face. I could get sucked up into the otherworldliness; or I could maintain a balance and do my job.

I found that C.P.E. had given me valuable tools. I had more than just a minute to listen to soldiers. I had gained the tool called self-differentiation, the ability to be a participant/observer. The act of ministry is an interpersonal relationship. And to that relationship I bring my self. That self has dynamics: attitudes, values, goals. And processes: emotions, behaviors, responses. In any act of pastoral care the pastor's greatest tool is listening. And listening can be genuine only if the listener is aware of the inner person, that self brought to the act of ministry.

I was afraid. I was being called to name my emotion, to own it, and to use it as a tool. I could genuinely empathize with soldiers because I had an inner resource which allowed me to know exactly what they were feeling. And if I had my self as a resource, my own use of my fear gave me potential responses to the questions that soldiers asked. "Being afraid is normal. It is okay to have fear. I cannot take your fear away. But do you want to lose it? It is a tool, maybe the thing that will help keep you alive."

The self-differentiation helped me maintain my identity. I could experience the otherworldliness without being drawn into it. I could avoid the language of the otherworld, and offer what no one else did, "God talk." I could stand opposed to the otherworld and be an example of faith to show that faith can indeed be maintained even here. And by the example offer words of encouragement and hope.

Thru the application of an attitude I was able to employ listening, the



pastor's greatest tool. And thru the listening I was able to discern the needs of soldiers. Counseling, preaching and frequency of worship, classes and visiting and presence are methods of addressing needs. Thru them ministry becomes intentional, a creative act.

## Encounter

As I surveyed the desert in peace, I thought about those days before the ground phase began. Aside from fear of dying, our greatest fear had been of chemical weapons. We had been indoctrinated and trained intensely in the use of our chemical masks and suits. And we prayed even more intensely for deliverance from chemical attack.

As the ground phase began, the spring winds began to blow across the desert. The "Shamal" is a desert storm which blows with hurricane force winds. It hit us full force the day the ground phase began. At the Log Base we lost tents, vehicles were blown over, and we experienced one of the worst nights of our lives. We focused on our discomfort.

But after the winds had done their worst, we assessed what had happened. A medical clearing company has the mission to decontaminate chemical victims. In a chemical environment we had a double mission, to keep ourselves alive and to deal with victims. The effect of the Shamal on the mission had to be considered. And a great mystery arose from the assessment. The Shamal usually blows generally from the north to the south, northeast to southwest or northwest to southeast. For the first time in a century the Shamal blew from the south directly north. And for the first time in a decade, and one of the few times in this century, it was accompanied by rain.

For us these factors had special meaning. No matter what delivery system the Iraqis might choose to use, rocket or tube, the chemicals would be blown back into their faces. And no matter what potency they might choose to use, the rain would dissipate it. It was a miraculous answer to prayer.

There is a story in the gospels about Jesus crossing a sea in a boat. He fell asleep. A storm blew up, and the disciples were afraid. They woke Him, and asked Him why He did not care that they were perishing. He stood up and rebuked the wind and the sea. And they asked, "Who is this that even the wind and the water obey Him?" We did not have to ask. The net result of the assessment was a general agreement: the chaplain should continue doing whatever it was he was doing!

My experience of the desert war was the experience of the presence of God, a presence so emphatic that at times it was eerie. I encountered God in the desert. And very many around me shared that encounter. And I made a personal spiritual discovery. Letting go of my material and financial resources was in a real way liberating. I was freed, and an emptying process began. Fear and the dramatic passions of war emptied me even further. But when I was emptied of myself, I found that there was no vacuum. The Spirit of the living God was in me as the "still, small voice" within. God was in the Shamal; He was also inside.

This lesson from the desert was a potent reminder that ministry is not a simple human dynamic. There is much else involved. It is spiritual and full of mystery. And the pastor connects with the spiritual thru the exercise of prayer and worship.

This lesson is nothing new. But it was driven home to me in a new way. The emphasis was so powerful that I shall retain the lesson for life. And I pass my experience along to other pastors where ever they may be. Ministry is grounded on spirituality, on-going communion with God, and with the community of believers. It is the source and substance of witness and sustaining of the community.

## **What do I offer?**

The 547th elements of which I was part departed Long Base Charlie at G + two. We joined the 41st, and convoyed thru enemy territory to where the hospital was set up. For eleven days we offered aid to US soldiers, Iraqi EPW's (enemy prisoners of war), and Iraqi and Kuwaiti civilians. The total numbers of patients was never anything like that predicted. But the medical staff were doing their job.

In the midst of the medical effort the chaplain has a question to answer. Its substance is the pastor's identity and authority. What do I offer? In a combat setting the answer seems to come almost automatically from the environment. And for me it came in a most unexpected way—from my enemy.

The hospital treated many EPW's. The Iraqi's were very grateful for the kindnesses extended to them. Their wounds were being treated. They were being fed and given water. No one was interested in beating them or making them uncomfortable.

But then I came wearing a cross. I learned from our translator how to say in Arabic, "I am a chaplain." And I would show my cross. The Iraqis were not offended. But on many of the faces I could read an expression, "Oh, no. It has been good up until now. But here it comes." I could not speak their language, and few of them understood mine. But they understood tone of voice. They understood an attitude of prayer. And a gentle, healing touch is universal. At my touch grown men burst into tears. The expression on their faces melted, and I could see the change as they comprehended that what they had been told about their enemy was untrue.

What do I offer? The healing touch and prayer. The touching of the inner, spiritual self that medical technology cannot touch. I do not offer anything in conflict with the medical staff, but work as an organic part of the healing team. And what I offer is given to staff as well as to patients.

## **Reconstitution**

From Iraq our medical Task Force returned to Saudi Arabia, to Log Base Echo. The 547th elements, including me, were withdrawn to Log Base Charlie. And so it is that I find myself surveying the landscape and considering the lessons of the desert.

I find that one lesson appears to encompass the whole experience. I have learned the supervision of self. It is not just the management of a schedule; nor is it the application of methods or techniques. It is the use of self as a resource, and a pro-activity based on choice rather than external stimulate. It is the recognizing of my own needs and goals, and remaining objective to the goal of ministry: caring for my brother or sister. Allowing that other to work through emotions or dilemmas without injecting my own agenda. It is the goal of benefiting the other: part of being professional.

The desert is where the Christian faith has gone traditionally to confront self, and to encounter God. During a war in the Middle East, I had a desert experience. In my own microcosm of war and ministry I achieved my faith's goal in a desert experience. I have been affirmed and changed by it, forever and for good. And for the benefit of my fellow clergy I willingly share my insights, my lessons from the desert.





## **From Bedside To Battlefield**

**Keith I. Jones**

Here I was. Soaking wet! Angry, to say the least. Feeling sorry for myself. In front of me were about sixty soldiers of D Company, 1-32 Armor Battalion who were probably feeling much of the same. “How am I to give a word from the Lord?,” I wondered to myself. I recall thanking God for understanding our feelings and for sticking by us, anyway. I heard some Amens from the crowd. I knew that I had hit home with many of these homesick, frightened, and wearied tankers. It is the feeling that we get when we know that our sermon is being understood. It comes only when we share in the experience of deprivation that combat soldiers know so well. However, I must say that coming from the relative safety of Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), it is not a feeling that I expected to experience during this year that I was enrolled in Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.). Then came Desert Storm.

### **Changing Focus**

I have had much experience as a “combat chaplain” in a “leg” infantry unit in Fort Lewis’ 9th Infantry Division, and in the 3rd Infantry Division (Mech) in Germany. Enrollment in C.P.E. was a surprise. I had been in a civilian residency and worked as a civilian hospital chaplain. Consequently, this year was to reacquaint me with a ministry that I enjoyed and with which I felt some proficiency. When the BAMC program was terminated because of Desert Storm, I fully expected to do wartime ministry in a combat hospital. When I found myself headed towards the Iraqi border and the 1-32

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Chaplain (CPT) Keith I. Jones is a Chaplain Clinician at Womack Army Medical Activity, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In addition to nine Basic and Advanced C.P.E. units, he holds a Master of Education in Counseling from Virginia State University and a Master of Divinity from the School of Theology, Virginia Union University. He is endorsed by the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.

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Armor “Bandits,” I had to mentally change focus on the type of ministry I would be doing.

I began to do a comparison between hospital and unit ministry and I found that, though the setting was different, there are some important similarities in what is done by the hospital chaplain and the combat unit chaplain. In fact, I went forth with confidence born in field unit experience, refined by C.P.E. learnings.

## **First Priority and Pastoral Identity**

I entered the “Bandit” combat trains area understanding that rumors of an imminent ground attack were no longer rumors. In a few days, these soldiers would be facing real danger. Consequently, in my first meeting with the Battalion leadership I informed the commander of the pastor’s immediate concern . . . to meet as many soldiers as possible before “G-day”. It made sense that soldiers needed to know their pastor and that I needed to know them in case of casualties. The commander recognized the value of this task and resourced me that I could accomplish this first and most important mission.

For the next few days I was constantly on the road meeting every soldier that I could. I did worship talks at every vehicle and fighting position within our area of operation. I tried to establish as high a degree of visibility as possible. I wanted to define the chaplain for the entire task force.

C.P.E. residents spend much time talking about establishing one’s pastoral identity. The new resident must determine what the chaplain brings into the busy hospital setting. Often chaplains get lost at this point and become junior psychologists and social workers, or allow other staff workers to define the chaplain’s role. Consequently, they cease to be pastoral and become generic good deed doers. These are chaplains who are often afraid to use religious language. Even worse, they may misuse words of faith. Additionally, the chaplain without a firm pastoral identity will not have the pastoral authority needed to serve as an advocate for patients and staff.

The same holds true in the combat unit. A chaplain must have a well-entrenched sense of identity in order to be the commanders staff expert on matters of religion, morals and morale. Otherwise, the commander, and every other staff officer may feel obliged to define the chaplain’s role. Unit chaplains who allow this to happen may not benefit the commander and certainly will not be very useful to soldiers.

I was a C.P.E. chaplain in combat, yet, I felt very helpful to the command by defining spiritual/religious priorities. The 1-32 commander owned these priorities and resourced me so I could work his religious program.

Pastoral identity effects the language of the chaplain. Troop chaplains who are struggling with their identities may sound too much like soldiers or line officers (it is possible to over-identify). Hospital chaplains may shy away from faith language as they visit patients (This often occurs as the chaplain becomes over impressed with medical-science). Both chaplains may leave their congregates wondering what was pastoral about their visits.

The imminence of combat invited faith language. One frightened soldier asked, "Am I going to die?" Another sought assurance, "Promise me, Chaplain, that I'll make it home." Such queries were everywhere. My sense of identity suggested that such ultimate questions deserved ultimate answers. Though I claim no evangelistic intent, the effect of it was that I saw more than 200 soldiers dedicate their lives to Christ.

## **Few Desired This**

The battlefield was quite similar to the hospital; few desired to be there. Despite the bravado and macho talk, I found only a small number of soldiers who wanted to be in harm's way. Many were angry at the possibility of dying in this strange, barren land. Others just wanted to go home. Nobody wants to die.

The hospital is quite similar. I have not run across patients wanting to be sick or desiring to die.

Such a comparison made transitioning to desert ministry more comfortable. From my combat unit experiences, I knew that many soldiers were on active duty seeking educational benefits. Consequently, I could predict what many would feel about this experience. Soldiers were particularly frustrated at the failure of pre-battle peace posturing. They were very vocal with me as they vented frustrations and fears. My role was to listen reflectively, not minimizing their thoughts, but suggesting a word of faith for them in the midst of this on-coming storm.

Hospital chaplains listen daily to the storms of others. C.P.E. challenges the chaplain to walk into the breach with the patient, offering words of faith throughout the journey. The chaplain's role is not to talk them out of the fear. Such an effort may distance the pastor from the patient and may minimize the patient's concerns. Instead, we are to hold the hands of those who traverse dangerous paths.

Desert Storm presented the challenge to hold the hands of gung-ho, yet frightened, soldiers, encouraging them even in the midst of the unknown. I found real ministry in meeting soldiers where they were and confronting their fears by allowing them to talk about their inhibitions, by admitting my own, and by modeling courage to perform despite fear.

## **Casualties and Chaos**

Fears were heightened as the first casualties rolled in. An element of the Brigade task force went forward into Iraq to perform route reconnaissance. It was not long before the word filtered back to our aid station that the force had encountered heavy enemy fire and had suffered some casualties. Rumors spread like wild fire in a combat situation. Consequently, those of us waiting did not know whether to expect one, a few, or mass casualties. I imagined that scores of our troops were somewhere pinned down under a barrage of hostile attacks. As we waited for information, I did some heavy duty praying. The slowness of radio reports only fed the hyper-imaginings. Finally, the word reached us that there had been three fatalities and some



injuries. Our soldiers felt relief that the deaths were so few, yet grieved that there were any deaths at all. They wondered if death had visited any of their close friends. A death vigil ensued as soldiers waited for casualties to reach our trains. In the hospital, the chaplain sits with many families awaiting the news of the passage of a loved one. The pastor's role is to comfort families as grief begins. During the "vigil", I found myself talking with soldiers about the reality of death. As medics postured themselves for the oncoming tragedies, I tried to model peace and stability.

The pace picked up as the fatalities arrived. It was now dark and there was a quiet, yet certain curiosity as body bags were brought in for the physicians' death pronouncement. When the red and blue flashlight lenses offered definition to the mangled remains, an almost holy hush filled the air. In that same moment, I knew that eyes were on me to say something . . . to give the word of committal: for some as input to the casualty feeder card, for others, to make sense out of all of this. I do not recall what I said, but it must have been meaningful to the soldier standing beside me who responded "Amen, Thanks, Chaplain."

Death and grief are no strangers to the hospital chaplain. We are frequently called to pastor those who are dying and those who mourn the loss. C.P.E. offers the opportunity to adjust to the reality of one's own mortality. Thus, I was able to offer a comforting word from the Lord, as soldiers confronted death for the first time.

Controlled chaos is most evident in the trauma emergency room. Caregivers crowd around the injured, each offering help from their own specialty areas. The battlefield scene was the same as medics rushed to treat wounded American and Iraqi soldiers. The pace was frantic.

Intravenous bags were hung and patients moaned in pain. I found ministry in holding the hands of frightened wounded. As medics worked to treat their bodies, the chaplain offered a spiritual salve.

In the chaos caused by trauma, the chaplain's presence is a statement of calm and rationality; it is spoken to the excited young medic, and is much needed by the horrified injured.

## Conclusion

I survived the war with a lot of prayer. C.P.E. was valuable training in that I felt that I had the skill to work in an emotionally charged environment without becoming overwhelmed with my own anxieties.

Comparing the two environments was critical to making the quick transition from BAMC to the Iraqi border. Having made the comparison, I was sure about what I had to offer as a combat pastor to the "Bandits".

When I returned to BAMC and the Surgical Intensive Care Unit, I was met by head traumas, gunshot wounds and many deaths. One returning nurse remarked, "There is as much suffering here as I saw throughout the war." Through her statement, one that explained the reality of the medical center, I understood that I had been well prepared for the combat mission . . . that I was equipped to move from bedside to battlefield.







A service in the field in a "Saudi" tent about 20 miles from the Kuwaiti border. 3 January 1991, Echo Battery, 3-43 (PATRIOT) CH (CPT) Leon G. Kircher 3d. Bn. 43d Air Defense Artillery (PATRIOT) Bn. Chaplain

## Meals, Mail and Morale

**Leon G. Kircher**

**Charles P. Colosimo**

As our Army was put through the test of one its largest, and most rapid deployments, in history, one of the critical issues relating to mission accomplishment remained soldier care. The rail/air/sea-loading of helicopters, artillery, tanks, trucks, howitzers and missiles, etc., was a herculean effort and a testimony to the dedication and hard work of U.S. soldiers. This remarkable feat was accomplished in part by a commensurate desire on the part of the Army to care for the soldiers and their families so that morale and dedication to the mission would remain high.

It is the purpose of this article to look at soldier morale issues, particularly as they related to the Desert Shield deployment prior to the outbreak of hostilities. I will present a cursory look at our preparation for deployment followed by perceptions of morale on the ground in Saudi Arabia. I will also address matters that significantly contributed to good morale. An After-Action Report, written by Dr. (MAJ) Charles P. Colosimo, USAF psychologist, and by this writer, will be quoted. These reports were compiled after a visit to Patriot sites in the northern desert of Saudi Arabia. Observations and suggestions will be included.

Families must be cared for. A soldier that thinks only of problems at home will be of no use on the battlefield. One of our prime concerns was caring for families. Once we received our orders to deploy, we began to

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Chaplain (CPT) Leon G. Kircher is a United Methodist Chaplain assigned to the 3rd Battalion (PATRIOT), 43rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, Fort Bliss Texas. He is a graduate of Central Bible College in Springfield, MO, and Drew Theological School, Madison NJ.

Dr. (MAJ) Charles P. Colosimo was the Mental Health Consultant to the CENTAF Chaplain in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, from 554th Med Gp, Nellis AFB, Nevada.

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prepare our families and soldiers for the effects of our move. Some of the matters I addressed were as follows:

1. Assisted in the completion of the Battalion level Family Support Handbook.
2. Completed a Family Pre-Deployment Handbook.<sup>1</sup>
3. Completed a rear area family support plan.
4. Completed family support folders with pertinent information for battery support key contact persons.
5. Completed a rear area religious support plan.
6. Completed a "Resource Book" for the Battalion commander's wife that included the names and numbers of family support agencies, civilian and military.<sup>2</sup>
7. Set up a support system with the Fort Bliss based German Air Force Air Defense Artillery School to assist spouses back home. This included the maintenance of a food locker, small home/car repairs, and 24 hour a day assistance through rides to doctor appointments, commissary, or other important trips. German families also helped with baby-sitting. Although slow in beginning, this assistance has proven to be of great benefit to 3-43 soldiers.<sup>3</sup>
8. Completed a format for a monthly family newsletter to be sent to families from Saudi Arabia entitled: "3-43 in Country."
9. Arranged for a briefing by the Centurion Chapel Family Support Center for Battery Key Contact Persons.<sup>4</sup>
10. Assisted in planning a Brigade level gathering to discuss issues and concerns of Fort Bliss families. This was facilitated by the 11th ADA Brigade Chaplain (LTC) William Morrison, with representatives from the Red Cross, AER (Army Emergency Relief), ACS (Army Community Service) and William Beaumont Army Medical Center. Questions were addressed by the 11th ADA Brigade Commander, COL Joseph Garrett, III. Battalion level meetings were conducted following the Brigade's Presentation.
11. Assisted in planning regular Battery-Level Family Support Groups and gave several classes on deployment/separation issues.

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<sup>1</sup>I borrowed heavily from the Army Community Service Handbook on Deployment.

<sup>2</sup>The Resource Book was a compilation of items I had gathered from a number of sources. Virtually every military helping agency was represented, in addition to those in El Paso.

<sup>3</sup>To our delight, our support channels within the German Air Force's ADA School were working beyond our expectations. It served as a testimony to their concern for our families.

<sup>4</sup>A Family Support Center was established at Centurion Chapel by, the Fort Bliss Chaplains to assist 11th ADA Brigade and 3d ACR families. It is headed by CH (MAJ) Billy Goodwin. His contribution to the welfare of our families was a great source of comfort to deployed soldiers.



Although this is not an exhaustive list of all that the Fort Bliss Chaplains and 3-43 UMT sought to accomplish prior to deployment, it does point to the great seriousness with which families were prepared for the deployment. We have discovered, to our delight, that the programs in place coupled with the helping communities of Fort Bliss, the city of El Paso, and the German Air Force Air Defense Artillery School have significantly assisted in caring for the 3-43 Patriot families.

When soldiers know that their families are being cared for, they are better fit to do their duty on the battlefield. It is our constant concern that we continue to assist our soldiers in the field.

On 1-4 January 1991, the 3-43 ADA (Patriot) UMT (Unit Ministry Team) conducted a visit to outlying Patriot missile sites in Saudi Arabia. Three of our batteries were attached to Task Force 2-1 (Hawk), and were deployed in the northern Saudi desert. We took along with us an Air Force psychologist, MAJ Charles P. Colosimo, of the 23d Air Transportable Hospital. The purpose of our trip was to visit 3-43 soldiers, conduct services and hold stress reduction classes. Dr. Colosimo, as an outside observer, assisted in giving us an objective look at morale issues within the units. Our concern was simple: "How are the soldiers doing after five months in the desert?" Our trip encompassed over 1,000 miles from four-lane highways to desert dunes. After our return, the doctor and I submitted our reports and recommendations to LTC Thomas E. Smith, Commander of the Patriot Battalion with headquarters in Riyadh. Dr. Colosimo's report could serve as a primer for the basics of caring for the morale needs of soldiers in the field. Also, a big morale booster that I have tried to include in every visit to my soldiers was steaks, lots of "any servicemen" mail and "near beer" (close counts in the desert!). The sight of any new face was always a reason for joy. The ritual of the Army bar-b-que was alive and well in the desert.

Following are observations noted from our report:

*Meals:* Each commander went out of his way to provide hot meals daily for their soldiers. Meals had a community meeting "flavor" where all personnel gathered. If a mess tent was available, soldiers usually stayed around reading, playing cards or just socializing. Not all sites were able to get the foods desired by troops as frequently as they would like, of course. The types of meals many times depended on the determination of soldiers to make them better. Soda, Saudi cakes, fruit and "Top Shelf" meals were becoming a regular sight. MRE's were daily fare for at least one meal. Soldiers had a tendency to skip meals when they were not hot and prepared.

*Mail:* Soldiers were generally satisfied with the mail system. Most were simply resigned to the fact that it would not be regular and that delivery times would fluctuate between 7-20 days (of course there were horror stories of lost mail taking 30-40 days to arrive. But that was not common). Every effort was made to ensure its timely delivery. One soldier stated: "Mail becomes even more important than water," in isolated areas. It was the soldiers' link to the world, and could provide the nourishment he needed to go on. The concern about mail is so obvious that it hardly needs mentioning.

Suffice it to say from first-hand experience that it is critical to soldiers morale that the mail get through.

*Morale:* Community activities were an important contribution to high morale. Although a quiet, private time was important, being with other people was of greater benefit to a soldier especially if at least one person was a close, personal friend with which problems could be shared. Eating together, watching TV or sharing together in athletic events were great morale enhancers. It proved the old adage that "people need people."

Commanders met with soldiers frequently to disseminate information and dispel rumors. This facilitated a "participative feeling" among soldiers in terms of the way the unit was led. The critical importance of the soldiers' mission and reason for being in Saudi Arabia was also stressed at these meetings. On-going training that enhanced their sense of mission was also important. Attention was paid to soldiers' sleep and appetite habits. During general community meetings, the importance of good sleep and eating habits was stressed. "Watching out for your buddies" was always stressed by the battery commander. Of course, regular chaplain visits were very much sought after and contributed greatly toward the soldiers' spiritual cohesiveness. I paid particular attention to administering the sacraments in the field. I also emphasized a certain "formality" in the services. My reason for this was to try to introduce a little order and cohesion to lives that were going through turmoil and stress. I wanted to add some regularity to their time here. Soldiers were particularly appreciative of this. Counseling centered around separation issues. No matter where you found yourself or how good or bad you had it in Saudi Arabia, you were still separated from your family. Also, I am of the opinion that the loss of mobility was a factor contributing to low morale. We Americans are used to going where we want to when we want to. We also like to eat, bathe, and sleep, etc., when we choose. That loss of personal freedom was particularly tough on soldiers.

It is important to note that morale was given a big boost once our PATRIOT soldiers fired their missiles. When the air war started it seemed for awhile that the Riyadh batteries would not fire. Most of the SCUDs were heading for the coast or Israel. Our big surprise came on the morning of 22 January 1991 at about 12:40 a.m. The siren sounded and we began our nightly ritual of donning chemical gear and LBE. It had become such a ritual that some were moving a little more slowly than usual. It took a serious turn however when we heard the first horrendous explosions of the PATRIOT missiles reaching MACH-1 as they left their canisters, streaking toward incoming SCUDs. As we went flying into our bunkers to duck falling shrapnel, we witnessed the din of war. Explosions, flashes of light, and incoming SCUDs breaking through the atmosphere like comets was definitely scary.

First reports of a SCUD impact on one of our sites was thankfully false; we learned it was the explosion of a low intercept of a SCUD. No one had been that close to a launch before. Soldiers were running everywhere helping to get missiles reloaded in anticipation of further SCUDs. Six came

down that night and we got them all. The “SCUDBUSTERS” of 3-43 had their first of many successful nights.

Immediately, every soldier got a sense of mission. There was purpose to the training. Morale took a definite turn upward. Our requirement to wear the chemical suits 24 hours a day was tempered by the fact that our guys were saving hundreds of civilian lives in the capital. The adrenalin was running high. As a purely defensive weapons system, we were going after a piece of metal meant to kill people who couldn’t fight back. It felt good to be a PATRIOT.

## General Issues

Overall, the soldiers were more ready, relaxed and responsible if:

1. Leadership was participative management (i.e., “work as a team”).
2. Need for privacy was condoned and respected.
3. Family responsibilities were managed by the soldiers. Commanders and First Sergeants became involved in the following ways:
  - a. Watched length of time soldiers spent on phones in the field. This was done for two reasons; first, was concern for the cost, and second, arguments or extended conversations many times were signals for trouble.
  - b. Soldiers regularity in writing and receiving mail.
  - c. High interest in meals and the diet of troops, as well as sleep patterns.
  - d. “Dear John/Jane” letters. Help was sought *immediately* for those perceived as having coping problems.
4. Emphasis was present on *confrontive coping styles* for problem solving rather than passive coping where problems were ignored.
5. Performing daily *attitude checks* by NCO’s and officers regularly on personnel. This reveals the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide/homicide prevention. It gave the “pulse” of the group.
6. Promote *self-esteem* of the unit by frequently reminding them of the importance of their mission. This helped refocus the purpose of their role.
7. Promote *take charge* attitude among personnel when concerned about a friend or colleague.
8. The style of leadership is directly linked to soldiers’ morale. A caring/task orientation is the best mode of leadership. A “do or die” approach leads to depression and poor morale.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were presented to my commander following our evaluation:

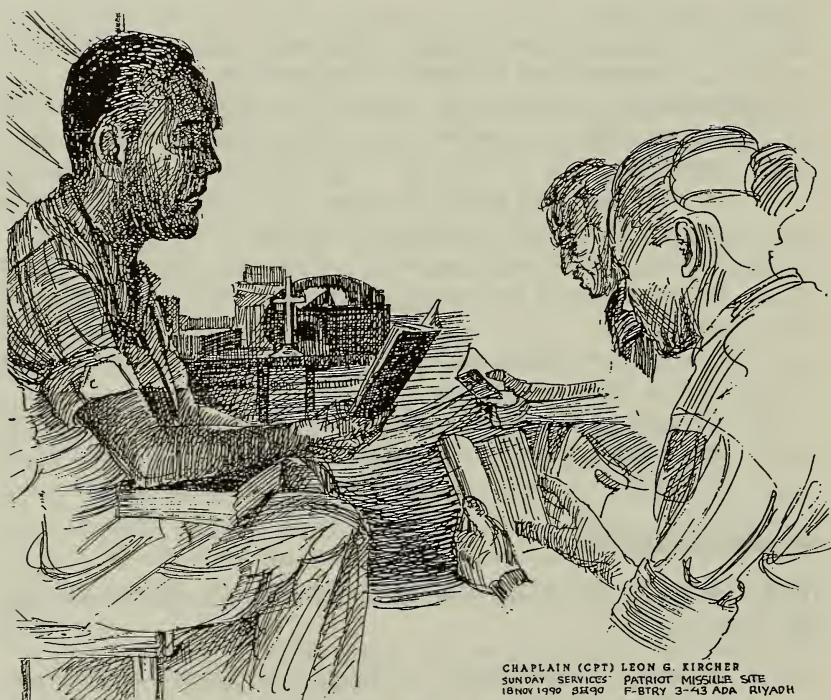
1. Promote “*town-meetings*” or “commander briefs” and information sharing sessions led by commanders to reinforce guidance, control rumors, and address troop concerns.



2. Establish standard meals, mail and morale site policies so personnel *can expect* certain standards of operation.
3. Emphasize a *can do* attitude among the troops for maximum performance.
4. Arrange for regular visits by mental health personnel for “preventive medicine” and to conduct consultation to the command and soldiers.

*Summary:* These may be principles that we’ve all heard, but it is safe to say now that to a large extent they have been proven. The more those in leadership positions concern themselves with soldiers issues such as meals, mail, and morale, the more responsive they are to those appointed over them.

As our military now begins the reverse process of redeployment, the task of reuniting families separated by so many months will be our concern for weeks to come. For chaplains, as for so many others, our work did not end at the cessation of hostilities. Families will remain our focus now as soldiers come home.



Pen and ink drawing by artist SFC Sieger Hartgers (560th Sig Bn) for the Center of Military History, Washington D.C.



## **The 1st Team Goes To Saudi Arabia**

**Gary T. Sanford**

August 1990. I was on my way back from Sioux City, Iowa with two of my sons. We stopped in Oklahoma City for the night. The message at the hotel said "Call Home." I phoned my wife Linda and she said all 1st CAV personnel were asked to return immediately. The 1st Team needs you for possible deployment to Saudi Arabia. My wife had been at a Division hail and farewell party, which turned out to be a farewell for the whole Division.

A lot of prayers went up that night before I finally fell asleep for the long drive back to Ford Hood.

### **Pre-Deployment**

When I returned, Ch (LTC) George Garner already had my NCOIC, SFC Alvin Videtto, his assistant SPC John Farrier, and all supervisory chaplains together in my office. Chaplain Garner, Chaplain Diggs, Chaplain Sharp were there; the 2AD Tiger BDE and CH (MAJ) Jere Kimmell were going to war with the 1ST CAV. No time for vacation now! The next month-and-a-half was spent in staff meetings, painting vehicles, loading vehicles and connexes, teaching religious culture briefs to the Division, and family support briefs for all families. I spoke to over 4,500 elementary children about dealing with mom and dad going to Desert Shield. III Corps and Garrison chaplains offices made sure we had a lot of Bibles, literature, and sacramental supplies. Terrorism classes, firing all weapons, chemical training, issuing of desert gear were all taking place in an orderly fashion. All our trips to NTC were paying off for our UMT's. They knew how to do all this stuff. Vehicles were heading to the port of Houston by wheel and rail.

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Chaplain (COL) Gary T. Sanford is the Installation Staff Chaplain at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He was formerly the Division Chaplain for the First Calvary Division (Air Mobile), and is endorsed by the Evangelical Free Church.

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This was it! Saddam Hussein, here comes the 1st Team, plus the Tiger Brigade!

## **Family Support**

What an answer to prayer we had with CH (MAJ) Billy Baughm, just arrived from Fort Belvoir, doing Family Life work, counseling, worship services, and many encouraging family programs. We could do our job in the desert, because this great UMT was taking care of our families. I was then able to speak to most of the wives, support groups and many school classes when I returned home in January. Family Support coverage was top notch!

## **Deployment**

Ch Garner and SPC Farrier went ahead with the advance party to establish communications with XVIII CORPS and set up places for ministry to all arriving soldiers. CH (COL) Bernard Lieving, and his 18th Airborne Corps staff were already on the ground and very supportive throughout Desert Shield. We flew from Fort Hood to hot and humid Dhahran and were billeted in huge warehouses, a tent city right on the Gulf. We had at least 1000 soldiers in each of the warehouses so we were prime terrorist targets. Needless to say we prayed a lot that we would get out soon to the desert. Our UMT's deployed with 60-90 days worth of supplies, reinforced by 18th ABN and III Corps at Fort Hood. We had connex containers and vehicles loaded down with all the extra Christian and Jewish literature we could send. Churches back home quickly responded with literature, Bibles, and words of encouragement. Even to us Vietnam Vets, the heat, humidity, and meager living conditions were a shock to the system. The UMT's all quickly adapted.

## **The J-Word and Morale Officer**

Religion was a very sensitive subject in this Muslim land. Our UMT's were present and charged up for ministry to all our soldiers, but we didn't want to be labeled as the "Ugly Americans," insensitive to Arab culture and religion. All chaplains were ordered to stay away from the news media because Saddam Hussein was using it as propaganda to show that we were really there to destroy Arab culture and religion. The press got to a few of us anyway, but we did a good job evading them. At first we were asked to be called Morale Officers but as soon as we got to the desert it was "chaplain." We were extra careful about Jewish services so each chaplain and assistant verbally announced "J" services Saturdays at the division-rear with CH (CPT) Ben Romer from the 24th MECH Div. Great ministry was carried out throughout the division; I cannot remember one complaint from the Saudis that we had offended anyone. The rabbi complained later that we didn't need to be so hush-hush about his presence, but we were still really careful.

## Religious Ministry

The Spirit was moving in the Desert amongst our soldiers. CH (MAJ) Robert Santry, our senior priest and his two other priests had a great ministry to Catholics throughout the division. Most of Fr Santry's religious supplies disappeared enroute, so we had to do some quick praying and improvising. CH (CPT) Scott Borderud and SPC John Weber, 1/7 CAV, had a chapel built out of MRE boxes filled with sand.

Bible studies, prayer meetings, prayer breakfasts, church services, baptisms, and plenty of fellowships kept our soldiers going in the desert. Back at port we found a swimming pool at the Saudi Air Base for baptisms. Out in the desert CH (CPT) Ronnie Berry of the 27th Support Battalion had a pool equipped for a Christmas Eve day baptism service where several soldiers were baptized.

We performed eight presentations of Handel's "Messiah" in the desert 23-26 December, led by MAJ James Womack, our Division Headquarters Commandant. We had two each day, and began with a Christmas concert by the 1st Cavalry Band, and then followed the "Messiah" with a Christmas Carol sing-along. Christmas trees popped up all over. After our Christmas Eve Candlelight services, many of us went Christmas Caroling from tent to tent underneath the beautiful star-studded Saudi sky. That Star of Bethlehem seemed to be shining right on us that night.

Rabbi Romer paid us a great Hanukkah visit with a dinner and service. All this great ministry plus some super holiday meals made this Hanukkah and Christmas season one our Desert Shield soldiers will never forget. The Christmas day dust storm made it look like a snowstorm, almost a white Christmas.

MAJ Wally Thim, 15th PSC (Personnel Service Center) Commander, led the LDS (Latter Day Saints) service back at the Division-Rear. A bus picked up all Muslim soldiers at 1000 hours Friday at the D-Rear and took them to the Mosque at Um Rabia. Chaplain assistant PFC Larry Wofford, ran a Church of Christ fellowship for the Aviation Brigade. The outpouring of God's Spirit was evident everywhere in the desert.

## Saudi-American Culture Exchange

CH (MAJ) Robert Santry, and his assistant SGT Abdon Garcia broke the ice for the Division in Saudi-American relations. Ch Santry, who studied Arabic at the University of Texas before leaving for Saudi Arabia, began an Arab language and culture class for his Aviation Brigade soldiers. He invited some local Saudis to be a part of the learning experience. Chaplain Santry visited the Mayor, judge, and Ihmam of Um Rabiah and started a weekly cultural exchange program. He downplayed the religious side of the exchange in order not to offend the Muslim Community. It was an instant hit! We soon found that our Saudi friends loved us for being in Saudi Arabia and protecting their country.

The Saudis joined our Division talent show, ate some American food, and did some Arab dances for us. They put on several dinners for us and we



learned how to greet each other Saudi style, kiss on both cheeks, bumping noses three times, and speak a little Arabic.

The town judge challenged me to a 60 yard dash and I lost by 15 yards. (Must have been those combat boots I had on.) Soon we were challenged to soccer, volleyball, a shooting contest, and singing. Old McDonald went over big; they knew several more verses than we did. There are now camels, lizards, and snakes on the farm too.

What a thrill it was to sit with the Saudis, Arab style, on the ground and eat chicken, fish, rice and salad with our right hands. That Bedouin bread cooked under the fire and the camel soup (yes, camel) was mighty fine.

We even sang the “Camel Soup” song for the Saudis; we said it was a favorite back here in the states. All this happened before Desert Storm, and did much to help the Desert Shield soldiers of the 1st Team to understand and appreciate each other and their Saudi allies.

## **Transition**

Amidst this very exciting ministry, spiritual renewal, and apprehension about combat, my 18 months as division chaplain was ending. CH (LTC) Dennis Camp came from Fort Hood about the 20th of December to replace me and I took him around the division to meet our leaders, troops, and UMT's. It was very tough to say goodbye to the 1st CAV, but I had living proof they were getting a great replacement. We had the exchange of the shepherd's stole 1 January 1991 at a Division prayer breakfast at the D-Rear hosted by CH (MAJ) Jim Agnew the DISCOM Chaplain. Former 1st CAV Div Chaplain (COL) Bernie Lieving assisted in the transition.

## **Persistence In Prayer**

As I find myself in another challenging job, Post Chaplain at Fort Belvoir Virginia, I look back and thank God for answered prayer in Desert Shield/Storm and the privilege of being one of God's UMT members. God answered our prayers, but not in a way we expected.

We prayed the troops wouldn't have to deploy, and they did.

We prayed Saddam Hussein would leave Kuwait, and he didn't.

We prayed we wouldn't have to use force, we did.

We prayed the air battle would end the war, it didn't.

We prayed the ground war would be quick, decisive, with minimal friendly casualties, and our prayers were answered more than we even ever expected.

It's a privilege to serve God when called upon; but it's sure great to be home!



## A Month of My Life . . .

Timothy J. Kikkert

1 February 1991

“For lo, I am with you always . . .”

We have all been here now for a month, some as long as 7 weeks. Time passes quickly, almost unnoticed. One day blends into another, each the same—same people, same clothes, same duties—Monday, Thursday or Sunday. I wear a little black cross on my helmet. I’m a chaplain.

One day there’s rain, one day you take a shower, the next day you get mail, or you don’t, but the underlying and overall conditions of life remain the same.

This is only temporary; we’re winning; we’re on schedule; but leaving here is a bright, shining light hidden behind a thick fog of days and days.

That sameness is not all bad. After several weeks there’s a predictability and familiarity that is comforting and strengthening. If I must be here I’m glad to know who I’m with, what I do and how I go about it.

Furthermore, you recall how you did very similar kinds of work at Hohenfels, or Grafenwoehr, or the National Training Center (Army training sites in Germany and California).

So the condition, the fact of life that I’m here and not somewhere else rests on me like a light coating of dust. Someday I’ll leave here and wash it off for good. But for now this is where I am and what I do.

Healthy, well-adjusted, confident soldiers then go on to make the best of their conditions. They really enjoy a steaming cup of coffee, or a refreshing shower, or reading a magazine. They value the friendship and support of their fellow soldiers; they keep their sense of humor.

And to the extent that a soldier accepts his present condition, he really does savor that cup of coffee, or cool Pepsi. In fact, that cold soda tastes better than the shrimp cocktail and steak he ate the night before deployment.

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Chaplain (CPT) Tim Kikkert is battalion chaplain for the 4th Battalion, 66th Regiment (Armor) in Aschaffenburg, FRG. He is endorsed by the Christian Reformed Church in America.

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(For that reason, dare I say it, being here can be easier for the soldier than the family member who waits.)

What poisons this bland, day-to-day routine is, of course, the war. This isn't Fort Irwin or Hohenfels. This is Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait (the three-country tour). Bibles are openly read, even studied. (Is this Armageddon?)

Most of the time, you can go through the day doing your work, eating your serving of food, laying on your cot, just feeling that light coating of conditional dust on yourself, but not letting it upset or depress you.

After all, we started preparing for this since before Thanksgiving, and in many respects I began preparing for this the first day I entered the Army (or seminary).

But then there are moments, chilling moments when you fear it. "Fear not, I bring you good news . . ."

For most, that first moment was way back in November when we first got the word. The word—Saudi Arabia. Like a double dose 'flu' shot, it leaves you almost reeling, sick, dizzy and confused. What will it be like? What does it mean? What will happen to me, my life, my family?

In that way going to war is like getting married (or divorced), having children, or retiring after a long career. The question of what it will be like fragments into dozens of little needle questions—will I be the same, will I survive, do I belong here, can I be counted on by my buddies? And then the question of death, which today still seems shadowy and distant. Death which, unlike marriage or retirement, makes war so awesome, and tragic.

Those needle questions hurt, so you avoid them as much as possible. Read a book, clean your weapon, take a nap. Stay busy, stay prepared, stay alive.

Stay alive. That's where all those questions end. Will I stay alive? You don't want to think about it, face it, deal with it. But from time to time, you must face it. "For lo, I am with you always . . ."

Saying goodbye to family, seeing nothing but sun and sand when you step off the C141, January 16, gas alerts issuing live ammunition, body bags, Marine casualties.

The reality is there, the prospect since August, the notification in November, the deployment in December, the outbreak of war in January. A growing reality.

Each step, each phase though, in time, becomes familiar—you accept, adjust, cope. But each phase has its needle pricks, reminders, that war causes death.

And so that's where we are today. Conditions are pretty good, the coffee tastes great, the shower was wonderful. The routine is familiar. But the reminders, the needle stings hurt. That is what it is like, that's how it feels.

Monday, 11 February 1991

"Dark and dismal is the morn, unaccompanied by Thee . . ."

The day begins as every other. It's five a.m. An alarm somewhere in the tent rings, a digital watch inside of a boot beeps twenty little beeps. A

sergeant in our tent starts calling our names to see if we are awake. We each have adopted our own answer when we hear our name—"yeah", "morning", "okay", "roger."

Sleeping bags begin to open. We slide out of our warm bags into clothes quickly so as not to lose the cozy overnight warmth.

It's dark and quiet, the air is chilled, the sand floor is hard-packed beneath our feet, cold and gritty, just soft enough to show the imprint of boots.

A red lens flashlight goes on casting a muted glow over a cot and a rucksack with a roll of white toilet paper sitting on top of it. Helmet, web gear, and gas mask lay nearby.

In a couple of minutes you're awake, alert, dressed, pulling your belt a little lighter than you did six weeks ago.

The sergeant kiddingly asks if the sleepy private is moving yet. "Yes, sergeant," confirms what the sergeant already knew. Nobody tries to sleep in. This isn't the place for sleeping in—besides you can catch a nap later in the day.

Someone who was on duty overnight sticks his head in the tent and says, "Stand to in ten minutes." "Stand to" means that you are up, dressed, alert, and ready. Ready to work, or to fight. You wonder what the overnight news is, what the coffee or cocoa possibilities are, will there be shower water today, or best of all, mail.

Boots slide on easily, it's not so chilly to make them stiff overnight. Lacing goes a little slowly by flashlight.

Field jacket, web gear, gas mask—and out of the tent one by one. Some go to the artillery hole. Drivers ease themselves behind the wheel of their vehicles, start the engine and wait patiently for the heater to take away the chill. The lucky ones stand by a heater, sip coffee and listen to a radio.

In the next hour, there will be time to eat a tuna-noodle MRE (meals, ready to eat) shave, finish off a letter and drop it in the cardboard mailbox.

By 7:30 the day is well under way. Trucks are moving, tools are out, cleaning gear is ready to go. And the soldiers are glad to be up, alert, and prepared.

Ready to answer any alarm.

"Safe and secure from all alarm..."

Monday, 18 February 1991

"Yours is the gold and silver and cattle on a thousand hills..."

My cot is my home and what's under it is my stuff.

If I'm lucky enough to have a thin slab of plywood, my stuff sets on the wood; otherwise the floor is sand.

We all have a couple of dusty duffle bags, laundry bag and rucksack. After that the amount of stuff and its placement under and around the cot reflect each individual personality.

The guy over there across from me always has a thick legal pad on his cot. He writes several letters a day. The guy next to him has a boom box with lights that flash when someone talks or sings. It has plastic wrapped around the handle (we're currently listening to Billy Joel).



The soldier over in the corner doesn't seem to have much stuff. He's a new private. Sometimes we offer him some of our stuff for awhile.

Next to me is a fellow who's into skin care. He has several little plastic bottles, cans, and vials of lotions and potions. There's also a big jar of almonds. I wonder if the almonds make him break out.

Across from me on the other side is a guy who always has a big box full of nuts, chocolates, mail, and magazines. It makes him look really rich and comfortable. Since the box is open and edges out into the aisle, it also suggests he's friendly and generous.

Others have little hordes, stashes and caches, hidden away in little boxes, bags and pouches. After it's dark, they quietly, secretly, make an inventory of their treasures, maybe eating just one nut or half a chocolate bar and then quickly wrapping up their goodies and putting them back in the bottom of a rucksack or duffle bag.

Packrat or benefactor, stuff-care is very important. Stuff you don't value gets left out—like a roll of toilet paper if you've got three, or a pack of cigarettes if your wife just sent you six cartons, or maybe a big jar of Tang when you crave a Coke.

Important stuff gets special care. A good walkman gets treated like a baby—wiped, held, wrapped in a clean towel and placed gently on a pillow. Tender stuff like a family picture is carried near the heart and often taken out and studied and maybe washed with a tear or two.

We all want to have the right stuff when we need it.

“Praise God, from whom all blessings—flow. . .”

Sunday, 24 February 1991 — 1050 hrs.

“Fear not one who can destroy the body. . .”

We're moving any time. Standing by the side of HQ30 (tracked vehicle carrying medical equipment). Sun shining, with strong wind blowing.

Always think about what Mary and the boys are doing at this hour.

Feelings of fear and uncertainty, but also some excitement and hope that it all be over soon.

Monday 25 February — 2100 hrs.

Sitting in HQ30, writing by chemical light.

Up at 0500, left at 0630. Dark, rainy all day. We're in Iraq.

At about 0900 we heard that a Republican Guard Commander surrendered or was captured.

At about 1500 we took 50 PWs. Very sad.

I think of what Mary and the boys are doing hour by hour now.

Bush called this “final phase”. That helps.

Heard rumblings of bombing all day long.

Picture myself running 7-10 miles each day at Thompson.

Seeing the PWs in the distance was very moving. At first we thought that they were wounded. Everyone was very cautious about them.

I hate it that Mary is probably very worried.

I wonder what each new day will bring this week?

I noticed today that everyone is starting to look tough and weatherbeaten.



27 February 1991 — 1120 hrs.

Sitting on HQ30, apparently in N. Kuwait, having Saudi Nescafe.

Took pictures of five PWs; one had shrapnel in his left foot, got 10m of morphine. Very sad.

Gave SFC Wiggins coffee.

Drove all night. Battalion has not received a scratch yet, only tanker's foot.

Hard to believe it's 4th day of the war.

Cloudy and rainy all morning. Dark and overcast now.

28 February 1991 — 1145 hrs.

Got the word of a possible ceasefire at about 0900.

Yesterday after 1120 moved behind tanks in CT (Combat trains—supplies, medics, chaplain).

About 1515 heard the whistling of artillery overhead. We headed SW as fast as possible. We were pulling the 557 (large medic-tracked vehicle) behind us.

About 1600 we got word of casualties (Scouts). Two upper body wounds and four in shock.

They arrived about 1630. SFC Wiggins' leg practically off at the knee. Corporal Knight first degree burns from neck up. Ellis, Phillips, England, Thompson shellshocked.

Both their scout tracks had been hit. They all asked about Cash. Wiggins was delirious and in pain. Knight was pretty jokey.

Treatment took close to an hour. Wiggins was in and out, received a lot of morphine, received encouragement to keep breathing.

Confusion about medevac—was it coming or not?

Shell-shocked soldiers sat or stumbled around in a daze. It was getting dark and overcast but no rain. Thompson (medic) looked confused and upset. Ahers (medic) yelled at somebody. Chief Gleason (surprisingly) stayed the most calm. Chief Johnson gave lots of encouragement to patients and staff.

Four shell-shocked jumped in back of ambulance (they only had the clothes on their backs). Two wounded left in other ambulance headed for 26th Support Battalion (a battalion with field hospital).

We rolled out at about 1800.

We stopped at about 2000 and ended up staying there for the night.

We rolled out again at about 0630 this morning.

We stopped for refuel and just as we were leaving (0830) there was word of a possible ceasefire.

We came to a halt. Got the word of MOPP O, clear weapons. (MOPP—Mission oriented protective posture—protective clothing for gas attack.)

I talked to the scouts off and on. They keep repeating what happened.

One of them mentioned a situation where a large number of Iraqis were walking toward them. They radioed request for what they should do. "Fire in front of them." They did that and the Iraqis kept walking forward. They radioed again for guidance. They were told to spray them, which they did.

Got the word that 1-1 Cav took a lot of casualties; 1-7 had 2 or 3 KIA, and 4-7 had none.

We only know of Cash (Mansfield, Ohio).

Felt great to take off MOPP suit and shave.

“In doubt and temptation, I rest Lord in Thee . . .”

1 March 1991

O, Lord my God, when I am in awesome wonder . . .”

After the war what you notice first is the wind. No planes overhead, no engines running, no explosions nearby. It’s quiet, like it was before, just a gentle calm breeze. Just the wind, sand and sky. Maybe a bird or a lizard, but they’re quiet. An Iraqi dog slinking by looking as if he missed the last bus out. He’s quiet too.

Wind blows across the sand gently, as if to say “We’ll be here long after you are gone,” oblivious to victory or defeat, life and death.

After the wind you notice the bunkers. Piles of sand with little caves underneath. Holes in the sand. Mounds with pipes sticking out for air. Narrow, beaten-down little entrances descending down four or five feet below the surface. Some too small for more than one small man; others with more rooms to accommodate more men.

Outfitted to be as homey and comfortable as one can be. Springs under the mattress, a table, a chair, clean clothes neatly arranged. Maybe a radio, or something to write on; military gear nearby.

The contents of some bunkers left perfectly intact, as if the occupant merely stepped out for a moment; others a chaotic pile, like a junkyard.

Some onions or a little white plastic bag of dates near the entrance, as if, when dashing out, the owner grabbed some food from the table but upon reaching the surface dropped them in his wild haste to get away.

No corpses or blood in evidence here, just one green shirt with a shredded hole in it the size of a pineapple.

Next there are vehicles here—a truck, a jeep, a bulldozer—none looking as though they will ever leave here again. They’re half hidden behind mounds of sand pushed up, perhaps, by that very bulldozer. Very still—looking very content to sit right where they are for ever.

In the open spaces between the bunkers, the twenty meters or so of flat surface are the real signs of war. Shards of metal in every conceivable size and configuration, but all are jagged and twisted, the results of some brilliant and violent explosions.

There are no boundaries to the battlefield; the chunks of metal can be found for hundreds of meters in every direction as if the violence spread out with ripples in every direction as far as the eye can see.

Spread out in one violent clash of fire, flash and metal and now already gradually smoothing out, settling down as the gentle, calm breeze blows by.

“For lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

## Training Made the Difference

**Charles H. Morrison III**

**Ford F. G'Segner**

The dictum, "Train like you go to war," is for many a trite cliché. However, we of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) Unit Ministry Team (UMT) had this as our *modus operandi* all along. This was particularly true with the arrival of a new Division Chaplain in July of 1989.

### Battle Focus

We adopted a battle focus, rewrote our mission essential task list (METL), and developed our training schedule to train the skills necessary for battlefield survival, the systems for managing religious support, the abilities to integrate religious support planning with task force operational plans and orders, and the ability of each UMT to provide religious support under the most difficult of combat conditions. Our training plan reflected this focus.

The monthly training on the third Thursday was oriented towards combat ministry. On the fifth Thursday of the month (once a quarter) we conducted additional training in family care and pastoral ministry.

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Chaplain (MAJ) Charles H. Morrison III, a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America, holds a BS from the United States Naval Academy, at Annapolis, MD; a MARC and a MDiv from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO. He was the Assistant Division Chaplain of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Chaplain (LTC) Ford F. G'Segner, a minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA), holds a BS from North Georgia College in Dahlonega, GA; a MDiv from Colombia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA; and a DMin from Drew University in Madison, NJ. He was the Division Chaplain of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He has published two previous articles in the *Military Chaplain's Review*.

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## **Religious Support Planning**

One of our most important areas of training was that of religious support planning. A religious support plan (RSP) is not a schedule of services to be conducted. It is the chaplain's definitive statement of his plan to provide religious support. The RSP must be in the same format as the G-3/S-3's memorandum of instruction (MOI), standing operating procedures (SOP), operation plan (OPLAN), or operation order (OPORD) with which it is published. The RSP covers all the various aspects of UMT operations including instructions for direct support (DS) and general support (GS) religious coverage, UMT responsibilities, area coverage plans, ministry to medical caregivers, as well as, coverage of collection points for soldiers wounded in action (WIAs), enemy prisoners of war (EPWs), displaced civilians (DCs), and graves registration personnel. In addition, the division RSP covers alternate command post and reconstitution responsibilities; outlines how denominational coverage (Jewish, Catholic, Orthodox, LDS, etc.) will be provided; and gives instructions on the succession policy, resupply channels, communications, and situation reporting. All these subjects and more were included in our religious support plan training model.

## **National Training Center**

Regular deployments for training to the National Training Center (NTC) were used to great advantage to prepare our UMTs for combat in a desert environment. Train-ups, gunneries, and other preparatory events all were used to great advantage to get the "basics" down pat. By using doctrine as the standard, when we got to the field doing it the right way was second nature. The opportunity for UMTs to practice the process of deployment and experience operations in a field environment did much to prepare our UMTs for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. This type training is equally effective for troops deploying to more temperate climes.

One practical example is that all our chaplains are licensed drivers. We trained this way. Our commanders understood and accepted this policy. It makes good sense for the chaplain to drive and the chaplain assistant to provide security. This one small training issue made a significant difference on the 500 kilometer road march which took us west of the Iraqi defenses after the beginning of the air war and on the 360 kilometer road march across the line of departure (LD) into Iraq and north onto the Basrah Plain during the ground war. It was essential for the chaplain assistant to have a break from driving. It was most important for the chaplain assistant to be the shotgun rider when the UMT was "in harm's way."

## **Combat Lifesaver**

One other very significant innovation in the 24th ID(M) is the requirement for each UMT member to be trained as a Combat Lifesaver. Because the UMT's role during the battle phase is caring for casualties, it is very important for both team members to assist as needed with medical proce-



dures performing ministry to the wounded. In this regard, close relations with medical personnel in the unit (relationships forged in prior field training) made it possible for UMTs to be accepted and minister in the high-stress environment of the battalion aid station or the medical company. This also fostered the opportunities for ministry to medical caregivers that must be done apart from visits to patients and casualties.

## **Command Post Exercises**

One other area of training which we emphasized was UMT participation in division-wide command post exercises (CPXs). It took persistent staff work to convince the division staff and subordinate commanders that chaplain participation and training was important. Prior to our efforts most commanders and staff officers viewed the chaplain as one who came to the field to conduct services—then to return to garrison to attend to the myriad of problems there.

We established the mind set that chaplains do have to attend to the problem solving business, but they and their assistants must be as well-trained as other soldiers. The lessons learned during a half dozen CPXs prior to Desert Shield established and validated our division UMT operational procedures. We saw a distinct difference in training as it related to the preparedness and effectiveness of our own UMTs and those others which were later attached to the Division. We believe training together for combat produces the finest, best prepared team of chaplains and chaplain assistants in the U. S. Army.

## **Honing the Edge**

Once the division arrived in Saudi Arabia we continued to hone the UMT to a razor's edge of readiness. Monthly training meetings were continued. We conducted refresher training for all our combat lifesavers using the medical officer and medical platoon leader of the Division Headquarters Company as instructors. We held a session on combat stress and battle fatigue conducted by the Stress Management Team from XVIII Corps. On another training day we discussed grief and ministry to soldiers suffering from the loss of their buddies due to both death and medical evacuation. During that session we were ably assisted by Chaplain (CPT) Roger Heath. He shared with us from his experiences with the 101st Airborne Division as their representative on the mortuary detail at Dover Air Force Base after the crash at Gander, Newfoundland. We also received a presentation from the NCOIC of a graves registration detachment. This helped us appreciate the care with which the remains of our fallen soldiers would be handled.

These successive sessions were designed to bring the UMT members to a point where they had a realistic view of the possibilities for the upcoming battle. We reviewed one last time the RSP for Operation Desert Storm. We hoped and prayed that we were as well prepared as we could possibly be.

## **Seminary Training**

We believe that our outstanding seminary training prepared us to be the best pastors we could be for this desert combat operation. We didn't have the library resources or the time to do extensive research when preparing for field services, bible studies, and other soldier spiritual nurture activities. The lessons we learned from godly men and women concerning the Scriptures and its application to life helped us to help soldiers through thoughtful liturgy, relevant biblical preaching, and empathetic counseling. Not only the facts learned in the seminary but the skills learned as well made all the difference in the effectiveness of our ministries.

## **Training Will Make the Difference In the Future**

An excellent program of UMT training with an intentional battle focus helped prepare the chaplains and chaplain assistants of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) for combat in Operation Desert Storm. This same kind of battle focused training is necessary to prepare your UMTs for the next time we have to go to war.

# **I Came to Know You Late**

**Julia Kim Casey**

## **This Is Not Really Happening**

It was a cold day in November when the office noise was drowned out by a loud commotion outside. Walking into the main administrative area, I noticed one of my civilian colleagues standing at the window. Now my curiosity was aroused. I walked to the window and looked out. I will never as long as I live forget the feeling of dread, sadness and fear that stabbed through me during that moment.

Below the window was a long line of camouflaged vehicles. The line stretched down the street and around the corner out of sight. The drivers had started their engines. On the ground a soldier with a clip board gave a signal to the first driver. The vehicle began to move and those behind followed. I thought, "it looks like a wagon train from a western movie." The vehicles went by the window making a vroom noise as they passed. They went out the gate, turned right and disappeared. Vroom, vroom, one at a time they passed.

This cannot be happening—vroom, vroom, vroom—I put my hands over my ears—vroom, vroom, vroom—not today, not to us.

Less than a week after Iraq invaded Kuwait and the United States airborne soldiers were on their way to Saudi Arabia, I stood in the middle of the United States military cemetery in Luxembourg. Staring at the white crosses and stars of David that lay in neat rows across the meadow, I remember saying to a chaplain friend standing near by, "Please God, don't let this happen again." Little did I know that it would come so close to home—vroom, vroom—in fact, that same Chaplain friend would soon be deployed.

For so long the conflict in southwest asia seemed distant and far

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Kim Casey is Director of Religious Education for VII Corps chaplains, FRG. She is a Southern Baptist, educated at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

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removed. That was until 9 November 1990, one year after the fall of the Berlin wall. The opening of the wall had been unbelievable. Now one short year later as we dedicated a Berlin Wall Memorial at VII Corps, our soldiers were asked to again answer the call of our nation.

Now the vroom, vroom, vroom of each vehicle departing Kelley kaserne emphasized the sadness and pain that I felt as I struggled to keep my composure. I turned to my colleague and noticed his eyes also brimmed with tears. Our looks confirmed what we had denied for the last three weeks, for the last few months. Our office was deploying to southwest asia.

## **What Does This Have To Do With Us?**

The change was immediate. The office was buzzing for 20 hours a day, seven days a week. There were many closed door meetings and impromptu consultations. There were purchases of insect repellent, fly swatters and duffel-bag inventories. There were spontaneous huddles and consultations.

There loomed before us several questions:

WHO WOULD GO?

WHO WOULD STAY BEHIND?

WILL THEY COME BACK AS A CORPS TO GERMANY?

WOULD THERE BE AN ACTUAL WAR?

WOULD BUSH REALLY DO IT OR WAS IT A BLUFF?

WOULD THEY ALL RETURN SAFELY?

Of course, I quickly surmised that all three civilians would stay in Germany. Our Corps Chaplain decided which UMT would stay behind to minister to Corps families. Our Commanding General confirmed, "Yes, VII Corps will return to Germany." That eliminated three of the questions. The remaining questions only God could answer.

We were faced with the basic unknown that permeated the thoughts of each person—each soldier, each family member and each civilian. This unknown would be at the base of all our waking and sleeping moments. On top would be piled other anxieties, frustrations, and uncertainties. But the "Big" question would always be there. Would they come back safely?

## **A Day To Anticipate**

The eight individuals who would be deploying from the VII Corps Chaplain's office began to appropriately pull away from the normal, everyday business of the office. Their mission was to organize into a team; prepare their supplies and equipment; and deploy to southwest asia. Each seemed to go through their own emotional preparation. Some pulled away and others pulled closer. Each handled the time differently. One way or the other each individual prepared himself physically, emotionally and spiritually.

As time grew closer we began to await our soldiers' departures. These were days of dread and faith. A time when you dreaded the "Well, I guess I'd better go." A time when you say "We'll pray for you until you return." A time when you watch each one walk away and give them a warm wave. A time when you are praying with each step they take—"Stay safe, stay safe, stay safe."



It was a time of a heightened sense of commitment. “Don’t worry, we’ll take care of your family, your office, your plants.” A time when even the most insignificant task seems important. A time when long work hours are the norm but without complaint. There was also a heightened sense of protectiveness. No one complained about vehicle inspections, guards walking the perimeter, and guarded phone conversations. We were reminded each time we turned on the electronic mail screen that a breach of security could jeopardize the safety of our friends. There was a sense of protecting them even though we were in Germany and they were “somewhere in southwest asia.”

More importantly, it was a great time of faith. We placed each person under the protection of God. We claimed the promises of Psalm 91:

“He who dwells in the shelter of the  
Most High,  
who abides in the shadow of the Almighty,  
will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my  
fortress:  
my God, in whom I trust.

For He will deliver you from the snare of  
the fowler  
and from the deadly pestilence;  
he will cover you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;

You will not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day,  
nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand;  
but it will not come near you.  
You will only look with your eyes  
and see the recompense of the wicked.

Because you have made the Lord your  
refuge,  
the Most High your habitation,  
no evil shall befall you,  
no scourge come near your tent.”

In fact, we did not just claim the promises, we held on tight.

## **The Mother of All Wars/The Father of All Fear**

When it happened on 17 January, I could not believe it. We were at war. I had watched the deployment of our entire Corps, the activation of thousands of reservists, the headlines of political negotiations with a deep hope that this conflict would be resolved.

As I watched CNN television that evening, I literally felt I should flinch from each bomb that fell on Baghdad. Is this real? Perhaps we will bomb for a short time as a sample for Iraq. Then we can really peacefully resolve this conflict.

I went to the telephone and dialed the number of the wife of one of our soldiers. She came to the phone crying, her voice shaking with tears. "He'll be alright," I said, "They'll all be alright." But if I am honest, I felt overwhelmed by the danger which my colleagues faced.

The community and the nation seemed stunned with fear. It can't really be happening. But it was and on national T.V. The volume on my prayer was turned up "STAY SAFE, STAY SAFE, STAY SAFE." The need to communicate with those deployed was frantic. "Did you get a letter, did they call, have you heard from them?"

As the bombing continued, the VII Corps families and friends began to anticipate the ground war. "When will it start? Maybe Saddam will surrender? Will he use gas?" The "Big" question loomed. Will they survive?

## **A Direct Route To Germany**

In spite of all of the anticipation, we were surprised when the ground war began. "Are they really moving?" We had each been given a wall map of southwest asia. However, for security reasons, we didn't know exactly where our people were. However, we all knew in our hearts where they were. I had jokingly but half seriously said to each one as they deployed, "Don't do anything heroic." But I knew there would be where they were needed and that meant with the soldiers. As it turned out, two of our teams stayed up front for most of the war. They ministered to young chaplains and soldiers offering them hope and assurance.

The news on the ground war was sketchy. In fact the war was over before most of the stories made print. VII Corps had engaged the famed Republican Guard and defeated it in three days. It was hard to believe. The news was jubilant as was the nation. But those of us here in Germany were cautious. We knew there were on-going skirmishes. Would Saddam fire off Scuds in desperation?

## **When Will We Hear From Them?**

The need to contact our deployed soldiers from the VII Corps Chaplain's office was again almost frantic. However, all communication was bogged down. All we could do was wait. On the third morning of the ground war an amazing message appeared on our electronic mail screen. It said:

"To the VII Corps Chaplain office from the VII Corps Chaplain Office. Tell all our families and friends that we are okay!"

It was amazing because we had never had Email contact before and never would again!

## **Days of Joy**

They were coming home. A few at a time, they were coming home. One by one the soldiers from the VII Corps Chaplain's office returned safely to Germany. We met each group with waving American flags and cheers. They were our heroes—men and women of the VII Corps. They looked great! Most were thinner, tanner and more confident. It was obvious they had been involved in an event that would change their lives just as those of us who stayed behind had been altered.

## **How Come I Never Knew?**

It is true that all of our lives had been changed. And as we move on through this time of integration and drawdown, we are all processing the lessons we have learned. From my perspective it seems I have learned the most.

It has taken several weeks for me to finish at least the initial integration of Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Provide Comfort into my life. The processing of the feelings of fear, joy, anger, helplessness, and commitment will take longer.

The greatest problem for me has not to do with VII Corps involvement in "the war," but my lack of comprehension of the mission of chaplains and chaplain assistants. I cannot understand how I could work with, alongside of and for chaplains and chaplain assistants without really understanding what you do? How can a person work for the military for sixteen years and not comprehend the full mission?

I have always prided myself in being non-violent and non-aggressive. I had never had to face the purpose for the existence of the office for which I work. During the war I found myself watching the action on T.V. and saying, "How can I be a part of this?"

I also felt something else: a great deal of pride; a sense of belonging to an institution that was professional, controlled and compassionate.

The military is not just a tool to be used by politicians. It is a reflection of the leaders and everyday people in a nation. Every nation is established on values; some are good and wholesome others are evil and destructive. If a nation's values are good and wholesome, then its military will reflect these values. If the values which permeate a nation are compassion and integrity then the soldiers will reflect these attributes.

Soldiers are not puppets to be directed without thought to their actions. We learned this from World War II. We saw this again in Southwest Asia when our soldiers treated Iraqi prisoners with compassion and assured them of their safety.

The great stories of Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Provide Comfort will be the humanitarian efforts of the soldiers: the handing out of food, the laughter of soldiers with children and the healing hand of a medic. We will remember the quietly spoken prayers to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by a U.S. army Chaplain over the graves of Iraqi soldiers. All of these actions of good and compassion transformed a hot desert into a place of hope for all people of faith.



There are also other heroes of Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Provide Comfort. These are the Unit Ministry Teams who stayed in Germany including the reservists who deployed to provide ministry to families left behind.

With the deployment of 80% of our office, the critical duties had to be maintained. I was given the role of Training Officer within VII Corps, an unusual task for a Director of Religious Education. It was one I approached with a little anxiety but with commitment. My fear was that the Chaplains and Assistants would not respond to a civilian in this role. My fears were useless. To a person, the chaplains and assistants responded with professionalism and cooperation. I never heard “I can’t do it.” It was always “When do you need it?” Even when I knew they were overburdened with just meeting minimal ministry needs, they were always supportive and cooperative. I often presented them with “just one more suspense.” I could hear the tiredness in their voices and see it on their faces. They never hesitated.

The reservists gave us hope. They arrived in Germany from their civilian lives as teachers, police officers, pastors, truck drivers and students—all men and women of faith. They held out their hands to the soldiers, family members and civilians left in Germany. They ministered to us and with us. It was like receiving a letter from home but this time it was from our churches. “We love you, we’re praying for you, we’ve sent these people to walk along side you as long as you need them.”

Yes, I have learned the most from this time of war. I have learned the most about God. I have learned that:

**God is a God of Peace.** God will also bless those who go to battle for a cause that is just and right.

**God is a dependable God.** He will answer prayer.

**God is a God of love.** He loves his children whether they be soldier or civilian.

**God is a God of compassion.** He will not leave his children alone in the wilderness.

**God is a God of comfort.** Those who lost loved ones will not go un comforted.

## **The Mission of the Unit Ministry Team**

Each soldier who walks away from the home he/she loves and from the people he/she loves deserves the very best. When you sacrifice the very best in your life to better another’s, you are a hero. Most of all you deserve to be able to worship the way that is meaningful to you and your family. I finally understand the Chaplain’s role in assuring the soldier’s spiritual needs are met.

When endorsing agents prepare to bring on a chaplain for active duty, they should ask, “Is this person our very best? Is this the chaplain I would



want with my son or daughter in a foxhole? Is this the person I want to hold my son or daughter when they take their last breath?"

The chaplain assistant is a soldier first. I will never question a day at the rifle range or common task training again. Your role as protector of the chaplain and as the facilitator of ministry goes far beyond my realization. Be proud of your identity.

When a recruiter signs up an individual to the MOS of chaplain assistant. They should ask themselves "Will this person be able to defend him/herself and a chaplain under hostile fire?" "Will this person be a second set of ears for the chaplain by being able to sense ministry opportunities among other soldiers?" "Will this person be looked on as a person of integrity and as a real soldier by his/her peers?"

## **A Grateful Moment**

To you with whom I served in the VII Corps office itself, I am very proud of you: proud of your professionalism, your sense of ministry, your commitment and your compassion. Your ministry is critical to a soldier and his or her family. I am proud to have been apart of this operation and to call you colleagues. Thanks for the lessons!



# The Two Sides of the Front Line

**Thomas Paul Azar**

The aim of this article is twofold: 1) preparing for world crisis like Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm begins long before the crisis explodes—it began at our calling, upon entering active duty, and with vibrant chapel people and programs; 2) the frontline has two sides—one in the Middle East and the other at home with dependents, co-workers and friends.

## Background

Plattsburgh AFB N.Y., the home of the 380th Bombardment Wing, is the largest tactical wing in the Strategic Air Command. Plattsburgh AFB is the second oldest military installation in the U.S., predating the Revolutionary War. Its mission is to deter aggression against the United States and its allies. The 380th supports this objective through its ability to launch and recover FB-111 and KC-135 aircraft. The bombers and tankers are on continuous alert throughout the year.

## Mission and Ministry

The chapel staff and laity are aggressively and intentionally fulfilling the chaplain service mission through a comprehensive religious program of worship, pastoral care and counseling, visitation, personal growth, and “where the people are” activities both in duty locations and deployment areas. The staff is firmly committed to and excelling in modeling our theme “You Can Make A Difference.”

Supporting Operation Desert Shield and Storm has required fine tuning

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Chaplain, Captain, Thomas Paul Azar, USAF, is a Protestant Chaplain at Plattsburg AFB, NY. He graduated from Hunter College, New York, and received his M.Div. and D.Min. from Emory University's Candler School of Theology, Atlanta, GA. He is endorsed by the National Baptist Church in America.

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of the programs and people and places. Our staff and laity have been working together in a dedicated effort to form an embracing and thorough ministerial team. Ecumenical programs and the ministries of the different major faith groups help us reach out to better know and understand others prior to a crisis or an outbreak of war. The chapel family with its unique talents has joined together in many activities that demonstrate its commitment and unity. For example, a best ever, National Prayer Breakfast filled the 400 seat Officer's Club to capacity for the eighth year in a row. Our annual POW-MIA breakfast brought together, in addition to DoD personnel and dependents, civilian religious leaders, who stayed on as part of our Clergy Day for an enriching day of briefings and discussion on the bridge-building role of the chaplain and clergy. This success is a direct outgrowth of our Catholic and Protestant Chaplains who meet monthly with members of the Plattsburgh Interfaith Council and Evangelical Association. When family members who live or worship off-base needed support because their spouses were deployed, chaplains and local clergy persons planned programs to meet their needs. When a chapel family that worships on base had a unmet need because our chaplain was deployed, the civilian clergy met the need.

Chapel rapport with commanders and first sergeants has been caring and continuous. Chaplains attend squadron functions on a regular basis from banquets and barbeques, to commander's call and inspections.

To better care for our singles, our chapel team revamped its outreach by bringing the chapel to the men and women living in the dorms. Our "Dorm Dwellers Monthly Cookout" attracted the support of different squadron representatives who served over 1,500 single men and women at cookouts held behind the Chapel and adjacent to the dorms. In the cold months, chaplains, their families and the laity brought brownies and ice cream to dorm members. The cooperation of the Protestant and Catholic communities became the prepared foundation upon which to launch our response to the varied needs of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

On the foundation of these ecclesiastical and ecumenical accomplishments, our Pastoral Ministry Team (PMT) was deployed to the frontline in the Middle East, while the remaining staff took care of the frontline of dependents and activated reservists here at Plattsburgh. Responding meant being ready. Our PMT honed in on the mission needs and dependent families. Chaplains, chapel managers and the laity increased and intensified our meetings on a daily and weekly basis to assess and accomplish goals. Our staff revamped meetings to plan goals and outline key actions. For example, when our deployed team called for Bibles, hymn books, literature and stationary to set up a desert chapel from scratch, the response was immediate and complete. When their family members needed assistance with home or automobile repairs, or with finances, staff members cheerfully attended to them.

Moreover the chapel was the first organization at base town meetings to provide a thorough, 14-page handout for spouses and their families on what to do about stress, children, finances and developing new skills in times of deployment. Chaplains began religious and cultural briefings on the



Middle East in conjunction with chemical warfare training at Commander's Call, and at town meetings. A total of 2,500 people were briefed on this pre-emptive ministry. From this, two briefings were written for all chaplains to utilize at various meetings and mobility lines. As the air war intensified and the ground war neared, chaplains briefed men and women on "the stages and process of good grief" at Commander's calls and Top 3 NCO staff meetings.

Chaplain presence with the deployed and their families, from notification to embarking, regardless of the day or hour, has underscored our commitment to "making a difference" in the Wing. Throughout the harsh northern winter, chaplains are visible giving hot cider and donuts at Base Ops as well as on the departing tankers. On the mobility processing line, men and women deploying received an "ecumenical survival kit" that contained a large selection of interfaith literature that went like hot cakes. In addition, we distributed several thousand free, desert-cammi New Testaments.

The New Base Chapel became the site of a newly created "Service of Hope." This daily interfaith noon prayer service for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm provided family members and friends a forum to express their hopes and fears, and to call upon God together. On Wednesdays, all chaplains were key players at the 0900 and 1900 Town Meetings of the Wing Commander. The Installation Staff Chaplain was on a panel with other base agencies that provided answers to questions. Often spouses engaged in brief short-time counseling following the meeting.

When loneliness and stress swelled in our adolescents, chaplains held a weekly "Teen Night" to address the issues of these young men and women who missed one of their parents. Weekdays and weekends were made available to meet the growing counseling and pastoral needs of spouses and their families, as well as reservists sent to Plattsburgh to meet manning requirements.

Furthermore, the Chapel served as the key gathering point for packages and letters going and returning space-A on our aircraft to and from the Middle East. Hundreds of parents and spouses passed through our offices to gain updated information on upcoming programs and activities. Our religious literature racks provided sensitive and supportive material for all.

Throughout the duration of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, lunches, dinners and special services were set up by the staff and laity in order to provide hope and care for family members. The chapel took initiative early on in advising the Base Commander to form a crisis working group of key players to determine what should be done if war broke out or a large scale disaster occurred related to Desert Storm.

Many of these initiatives succeeded because the democratic forum of the Chapel family and Councils allow individuals to voice, own, and act on their ideas. This acceptance led to action. Being ready for the chaplains began with well-focused chaplain education courses through the major commands, a viable ministry of presence, and consistent participation in major deployments. A sincere and active involvement in the life of the military family always kept the door of invitation open for the entire staff. The past few years have been filled with strong interfaith networking and

outreach to families and singles. Just as God's champions did not limit themselves to teaching in the Temple, but rather went out to wherever there were needs, so too the chapel staff and laity continue to triage the evolving needs of the Bomb Wing, and respond with clarity, courage and care. We have gone the extra mile to meet the needs of all who call upon us, and many who do not, both on the front lines of the Middle East and at Plattsburgh. We have and will continue to make a difference.

## Ministry of Presence

**Charles A. Debney**

On August 2, 1990, like many of you I found myself glued to the latest news on the television set. For the next 100 days much of what our nation was doing would come to a grinding halt to hear the latest word from Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, Tom Brokaw or a host of other journalists that traveled to the regions of the Persian Gulf.

I had been introduced to the region back in the fall of 1982 when I had been sent as part of a joint task force for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force or RDJTF (A), the predecessor of Central Command (CENTCOM). It was our job to prepare operational plans and bases in which to operate out of in the event of aggression from the Soviet Union, her principle ally in the region (Iraq), or Iran. From the above experience, I knew better than most the sequence of events that would follow Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on that day in August.

Following my assignment with XVIII Airborne Corps I was sent to the Sinai for eight months as the senior force chaplain for the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) and assigned to U.S. Army element and XVIII Airborne Corps (Forward). In addition to my duties as chaplain, I volunteered to be an interpreter for the Force Commander, a Norwegian, since I was the only member of his staff that spoke English as well as Spanish, French, German, Hebrew, and could get by with basic Arabic. Based upon my previous experience and assignments, I just knew it would be a short time before I received orders to the Persian Gulf. Besides, I was probably one of just a few chaplains that had Southwest Asia on my dream sheet. I had enjoyed my tours there and had always been willing to go back. Therefore I took breaks in the days following August 2, to get prepared for overseas

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Chaplain (MAJ) Charles Debney is the Staff Chaplain at Fort Hunter-Liggett, California, serving the Operational Test and Evaluation Command. He attended the USMA at West Point, Baylor University, and received his M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He is a Southern Baptist Clergyman.

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deployment. I dusted off my old desert fatigues and pulled out an old folder of "Lessons Learned in the Desert" and waited for the telephone to ring. I had even took an early PT test because I had learned that the desert is no place to have to take a PT test. Every day the commander and I would get together and talk about our mixed emotions about all that was going on and our desires to be with our soldiers.

As the days passed, I was ready. I had prepared my self and I had prepared my family. Being the only chaplain assigned to the Operational Test and Evaluation Command (OPTEC) Ft. Hunter-Liggett, California, keeps one busy most of the time. As U.S. forces prepared for the ground war, Forces Command (FORSCOM) began to levy other commands for soldiers—both enlisted and officers. Our command was no exception. In spite of continuing to test and evaluate new tactics and equipment, we received continuing requests for our soldiers to be deployed. They were always short fused which made things difficult. Even worse, most of our soldiers commuted 86 miles one way to work every day. To stretch the budget, most of the lower enlisted ranks stayed in the barracks during the week and returned home on the weekends which meant limited time with families. Imagine having to get up early enough to drive 86 miles and be at PT by 0600, working a full day, and at best being released around 1730 for another 86 miles drive home to see your family. Then one day you come into work and you find out that you are on orders for the Persian Gulf and have to report within 48 hours.

Because we are not a deployable unit our soldiers did not even have the advantage of deploying as part of their own unit. They would be piecemealed out to units that needed tankers, infantrymen, drivers, mechanics, and even some clerks. Some would be assigned to the 82nd Airborne, some to the 24th Infantry, some to the 3rd Armored Cav, and others to the 2nd Cav and VII Corps out of Europe. Some were even assigned to CENTCOM Headquarters. But all went to different units and different posts. Trying to keep families abreast of how their spouses were doing without violating security regulations was going to be a nightmare. My command was supportive however. They got me a secure telephone line, secure FAX machine, and patched the chapel computers to a DA network with the latest news on personnel taskings and status in the Gulf. Along with the Combat Experimentation Battalion Commander and staff we established a family support plan that met regularly with the family members of those deploying and called them at least once a week to see if there were any needs that could be assisted by the command. All Commanders from lieutenants to the commanding general took an active part in seeking to take care of the families.

It was not all easy. Getting news from the various units was sometimes extremely difficult. While most commanders deploying saw no problem in having regular support group meeting and explaining all that was going on to the family members at their particular post or installation, some were extremely reluctant to pass that same information on to families located at other posts and whose soldiers were temporarily assigned to their units for the duration. Even over a secure net some chaplains made it difficult to pass



on information to families located away from their own installations. As a result we had a couple of families that chose, at great personal expense, to move to installations where their husbands had deployed from because they felt they could get more information. This situation was rare, but it is worth noting. However, in most cases, the installation chaplains assigned as rear detachment chaplains quickly passed on unclassified information as they received it.

As Christmas approached, it was certain that the ground war was inevitable. Mobilizing the Reserves and calling forces in from Europe meant it was just a matter of time before Saddam Hussein encountered the cold steel facts of U.S. ground forces. I had chosen not to volunteer for Gulf duty since God was keeping me busy. Perhaps He had something more for me to do at Fort Hunter-Liggett. Each day kept me busy with requests for assistance from family members—both male and female—and from soldiers who had deployed. Christmas was family time and having personally spent one Christmas in Southwest Asia I knew it would be rough for families in CONUS and soldiers in the desert. The chapel decided that we would list in the Sunday bulletin the soldiers, family members, and close friends that had deployed. Every Sunday we prayed for each by name. We began a weekly “Remembrance Service” which was non-denominational but included prayers and a tolling of the chapel bell for each soldier. As their name was called it was followed by a moment of silent prayer. We also joined in singing all stanzas of hymns like “The National Anthem” (last stanza very appropriate) and “Eternal Father, Strong To Save.” In addition, the chapel carillon played only one song a day until peace was declared: Lee Greenwood’s “I’m Proud To Be An American” played at noon every day. Finally I sat down and wrote a personal letter to each family member, the soldier’s parents, and to each soldier who had deployed from the command. It was not a form letter. Each was different and unique, contained a package of pre-sweetened Kool Aid and was sealed with a prayer. I also found myself writing one for the commander. In that letter I tried to put into words what I would have wanted to know from back home—mostly that their families were being taken care of and that each soldier was not forgotten. In addition, the chapel and community sent out care packages.

The ground offensive was soon to start; but in no time the war was over and the troops began to return. The troops came back just like they left: one at a time. I found myself, along with the commander, at the airport welcoming each back home. On one occasion, the news media had received the word and had a very attractive anchor woman with short skirt and television camera to interview two of our soldiers coming home. As they stepped off the plane, one of the soldiers looked around; saw his girlfriend; saw the anchor woman, the television cameras, the commander; and then reached inside his stained desert fatigues and pulled out a crumpled sheet of paper. “Hey, Chaplain; I got your letter!” were his first words that he yelled out. And he reached out to me and broke out in tears.

No, I never got to serve in the gulf and do not have a combat patch or ribbon. But those words meant more than any award or any tour. I had stayed home and discovered “the ministry of presence.”



# The Greensburg Disaster: the Story of the 14th Quartermaster Disaster

**Richard L. Adams**

Nothing in my experience as an Army Chaplain prepared me for the intense drama that began to unfold in Greensburg, PA, on the morning of 27 February 1991. Earlier in the week an Iraqi Scud missile impacted on a transient billet in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing twenty-eight soldiers and wounding one hundred more. Thirteen of the dead were members of the 14th Quartermasters Corps Detachment—Water Purification, hereafter cited as 14th QM (WP), an Army Reserve Unit. Immediately, CH (LTC) David Kjosa, Sergeant Major Henry Webb and myself went to Greensburg, PA. to provide crisis ministry support. A press conference was scheduled for the morning by the Army Reserve Commander to provide the media with what scant information they had at the time. Families and friends, thinking this would be an opportunity to learn the identity of the dead and wounded, converged on the Army Reserve Center at Greensburg. The hours following were marked by indescribable tension, frustration, anxiety and stress on the part of family members once they realized the information that they sought was not available. Simultaneously, the next of kin notifiers began the mournful task. Some of the notifications took place at the Reserve Center, fueling an already tumultuous situation. The early hours and days were laden with the expected pain and grief as more details became available.

Family support personnel were immediate and spontaneous in their responses. Help came from a variety of military and civilian sources. The incident became a national event, symbolizing the cost of battle and attracting numerous VIPs and high ranking government officials.

The communities of Western Pennsylvania that were affected by this

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Chaplain (COL) Richard L. Adams is the First US Army Chaplain, and is endorsed by the Presbyterian Church USA. He has previously served at Fort Drum, New York, and the U.S. Army Chaplain Board at Fort Monmouth, NJ.

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loss were devastated and yet exemplary in their solidarity. Key to the care of families and communities were the chaplains who were continuously moving about the area consoling, listening, orchestrating, and ministering. CH (MAJ) John Hall from Fort Meade, MD faced the initial shock with the families and communities. CH (LTC) Ernie Knoche of the 99th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) provided a much needed pastoral presence to the families and the ARCOM. CH (LTC-P) Dennis Hamm, Jr., the Division Chaplain for the 80th Division (Tng) on special assignment to First Army, spent three weeks in the community working night and day with family support, mental health, military Public Affairs Officers (PAO), local officials, and so on. His report as well as the report of CH Hall follows as a lesson learned. At no time is the Chaplain more sought out than in times of death and dying. What follows will provide thoughtful insight into how one may minister in a crisis situation.



## Chaplain Ministry in the 14th Quartermaster Disaster

**Dennis G. Hamm, Jr.**

**John Hall**

On 25 February, 1991 the 14th QM (WP) located in Greensburg, Pennsylvania suffered the worst casualty losses of the Persian Gulf war when an Iraqi Scud missile struck the Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, barracks housing the sixty-nine member unit. Twenty-eight persons were killed and one hundred were wounded in the attack. Of those, thirteen of the dead and thirty-seven of the wounded belonged to the 14th QM (WP). This attack resulted in an 80% casualty rate for the Greensburg, PA-based unit. Of the sixty-nine soldiers that deployed with the 14th QM to the Persian Gulf, twenty-three returned to home station on 9 March 1991 to a gala homecoming. Five of the twenty-three were cross-leveled into the unit at Fort Lee, VA.

Lieutenant General James E. Thompson, Commander, First U. S. Army located at Fort Meade, Maryland on 26 February 1991 dispatched a Casualty Assistance Team (CAT) to Greensburg. The team consisted of an Administrative Team Chief, family support personnel, casualty assistance personnel, a mental health team from Kimbrough Army Hospital and two Chaplains from Fort Meade, MD.

The first task facing the Chaplain team was to establish priorities for ministry, and to develop certain assumptions about what could be expected

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Chaplain (LTC) Dennis Hamm, is Division Chaplain for the 80th USAR Training Division, Richmond, Virginia. He is the Executive Director of the Elizabethton, Tennessee Housing and Development Agency, and a minister of the Disciples of Christ Church. He holds degrees from E. Tennessee State University, Southern Baptist Seminary, the University of Virginia, and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond.

Chaplain (MAJ) John Hall is Family Life Chaplain at Fort Meade, MD. He is a graduate of the United Theological Seminary, Dayton Ohio, the University of Evansville, Indiana, and the Family Life Training program at Kansas State University. He is a United Methodist clergyman and has previously served in Fort Bliss, Fort Riley and FRG.

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as a result of multiple deaths and injuries. After team consultation it was decided that the priorities would be: ministry to families of Killed in Action (KIA) soldiers; ministry to family members of Wounded in Action (WIA) soldiers; military to returning soldiers; ministry to family members of returning survivors and finally, when possible, ministry to survivors/WIAs hospitalized in CONUS or OCONUS medical facilities. Looking back on this decision gives no cause for regret.

The second task was to develop certain assumptions regarding what to expect as pertains to behaviors and levels of grief resulting from the crisis incident. If the assumptions proved to be valid, they were maintained to guide ministry involvement; if not, they were discarded or revised. The following assumptions proved to be functional upon entering the Greensburg crisis environment.

1. Provide a chaplain presence at as many of the crisis events as was possible, to give a message about God's comfort in the moment, and God's promise for the future.
2. Provide "grief leadership" as soldiers, families and the community copes with the grief process.
3. The chaplain team will monitor each other to assist in maintaining a healthy balance regarding the levels of involvement and healthy detachment as we participated in the grief process.
4. The need to convey to the family and survivors the normalcy of the grief process, and yet not take from them their responsibility for working through this most painful process. It is essential to maintain our "outsider" status. The soldier, the family and the community must finally heal themselves.
5. As quickly as possible make it clear to families and survivors that help is available from a number of sources, and that the chaplain team will be a strong advocate for their legitimate needs.
6. As quickly as possible integrate chaplain activities with the roles of other CAT members.
7. Be prepared to use chaplain technical channels when necessary.
8. Work with other CAT members in identifying the many supporting institutions in the community, especially the family support groups, both civilian and military.
9. Refer all media requests to the PAO.
10. A genuine need to support the supporters. Make a conscious effort to "drop in" on the other teams. Allow other CAT members to minister to the chaplains.
11. Be prepared to conduct or assist in military funerals or other rituals of healing.
12. Returning soldiers and family members may experience delayed signs of stress. Monitor for early or active signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
13. Maintain a regular schedule of private devotions to nurture our spiritual strength.

14. As multiple commands are involved it is important to be very sensitive about boundary issues.
15. Ministry to non-deployed members of the unit.

To summarize the above listed pastoral concerns chaplain intervention focused on the four pillars of healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling. As a part of the healing process ministry concerns centered on behavioral and spiritual renewal, as well as educative counseling that focused on long and short term goal attainment. In this context, the goal of reconciliation stressed the inward look as the path to outward change.

Outcome goals included: (1) increased self and family understanding; (2) increased self, family and community identity; (3) increased self and family acceptance of changes resulting from being in two separate stressful environments; (4) increased self-direction that leads to family cohesion and reentry into both civil and religious communities; (5) and finally, increased expressions of love of self and others. Earlier in this article it was noted that several areas of priorities had been established to maximize chaplain ministry to families of soldiers serving with the 14th QM (WP). Further development of this crisis ministry report will focus on the shape and substance of that ministry and related items that require further development.

## **Ministry to Families of KIA Soldiers**

### **1. Problems With Next Of Kin (NOK) Notification.**

Family members received word of the Scud attack from surviving 14th QM (WP) personnel by telephone from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Secondly, the effectiveness of media coverage provided instant coverage of the explosion. A nearby TV crew filmed the events at the devastated warehouse. The TV crew showed the rescue, the extent of the damage and the unit's sign listing them as being from Farrell, PA. Families then converged on the Reserve Center located in Greensburg, PA. Notification officers and chaplains were in the Center to assist families with available information.

The families were near hysteria as there was no word on the full extent of casualties. Using the available information the notification officer escorted one of the families to his office. At this point notifications were made in the United States Army Reserve (USAR) Center. The notified families reaction sent panic through other family members sitting in the assembly hall. A second family was called out to talk with the notification officer. Their reaction further destabilized an already disrupted situation. At this point Chaplain Hall advised the notification officer that all families should be sent home. Reserve volunteers escorted the families past the media and where needed drove the families home. This accomplished, the notification process followed established procedures.

In another part of the Commonwealth a notification officer stopped to ask for directions to a family residence. The person giving directions called the family and told them "The Army is on its way to your home."



## **2. Successes with Notification of NOK.**

After the initial confusion with how best to utilize existing guidelines for NOK notification there were no further problems. A major success story in the notification process had to do with the involvement of Family Support Groups. Upon word of the extent of casualties to the 14th QM (WP) the local family support group was devastated. At this point another support group in the community came to their assistance and helped to stabilize the disrupted group. This proved to be invaluable to both the families and the Casualty Assistance Team (CAT).

They also made available caretaker families to those who needed additional assistance. The family support groups worked in tandem with the Casualty Assistance Team and the Family Support Officer, Major Joe Bles to provide for the needs of families.

Chaplains actively supported the roles of both the Casualty Assistance Team and the Family Assistance Officer. The Casualty Area Command (CAC) team arrived at 2030 hours on 26 February 1991. By 2100 hours the teams were fully operational. A 24 hour, toll free hotline was established to provide information to family members. On Wednesday, 27 February 1991 the CAC held a news conference and confirmed that an Iraqi Scud missile had impacted on the 14th QM (WP) Transient Barracks and that there were serious numbers of casualties. No other information was given to the media. Chaplain involvement in assisting with family grief after notification was actively sought for by the CAT members.

All thirteen funerals for the soldiers were attended by a military chaplain. Chaplains Hall and Hamm attended seven of these. Family response to our presence was very positive. All funerals were conducted by local parish clergy. The impact of chaplain involvement was most effective. The other team members readily utilized our people skills and the power of our role as a link between God and man. The perspective of "man and eternity" was wanted and readily given albeit through "earthen vessels."

## **Ministry To Family Members of Wounded In Action (WIA) Soldiers**

### **1. Problems with Notification of NOK.**

The following problems posed real challenges to Chaplain ministry during WIA notification and attempts to update the status of WIAs.

1. There did not appear to be a well-honed system to facilitate rapid notification of WIA families.
2. We experienced great difficulty in finding out where WIAs were located. Information on their status was sketchy and the movement of WIAs from one type of hospital to another further confused the reporting process.
3. Families were getting sketchy information from soldiers calling home. Much of this information was inaccurate.
4. Existing military hospital policy was to confirm the presence of a



soldier; but not to give the medical status of the soldier. In some cases military medical units would utilize a wing in a Saudi hospital. Calls to the main hospital line proved useless as the Saudis did not know about the wing or had no patient information on those soldiers who were being treated there. If one got the wing number and the staff was busy it proved difficult to get information from them. All of these are quite understandable situations, although they did limit the free flow of information.

5. In many instances elected officials and news media personnel would get WIA information before it could be processed through military channels. On one occasion this writer spent hours trying to find out where certain soldiers were located. That night on TV the local station broadcast the very information that we needed. Sometimes fact is stranger than fiction.
6. In one situation it took over ten days to locate and determine the precise medical status of one individual.

### **Chaplain Successes with WIA Notification**

1. System lag-time in WIA notification resulted in the use of chaplain technical channels to gain information on the location and status of WIAs. Chaplain Hall contacted a friend in the Navy and secured information on The Armed Forces Medical Regulating Office (ASMRO) located at Scott AFB, IL. A Navy Officer was found to be the WIA Processing Officer and on a daily basis provided us with accurate updates. ASMRO is the point of contact for the moving of WIAs from one hospital to another. In effect, they provide the "ticket" needed to relocate WIA personnel.
2. A second, contact point was Health Services Command, Office of Patient Administration and Records. Between the two a steady flow of updated information flowed into, and out of, our CAC. It is important that information of this type be included in any policy regarding chaplain involvement in casualty assistance operations.

### **Chaplain Ministry to Family Support Groups**

Liddell Hart once wrote, "Man has two supreme loyalties—to country and to family. . . so long as their families are safe, they will defend their country, believing that by their sacrifice they are safeguarding their families also." Family support groups are vital conduits for chaplain involvement during a crisis ministry situation. In this way the chaplain further enhances the individual soldier's capacity to perform his/her mission under even the most harsh of circumstances. Effective usage of this vehicle can and did result in ministry to both the families and to the returning soldiers. The following anecdotal data highlights Chaplain ministry in this arena.

1. When a support group (civilian or military) is faced with high casualties as was the case with the 14th QM (WP) internal controls are put into serious jeopardy. When news of the extent of casualty damage reached

Greensburg, the military family support group fell apart. A sister support group (civilian sponsored) entered the play and stabilized the disrupted (military sponsored) Greensburg group. Their intervention curbed the fear and panic that spread as information came from a number of extra-military sources. Local family support groups pressured both military and political channels to get updated casualty status reports. As a result of slow information on WIAs, families perceived military channels to be ineffective. There was some difficulty in reestablishing even limited credibility in this arena.

2. Chaplain involvement in family support groups was gladly welcomed. Chaplain Hamm visited five family support groups. Group members were reassured by the presence of a chaplain. When people saw the cross on the black sweater they would immediately begin a conversation. They would also appropriately touch the chaplain indicating their need for contact with their clergy in uniform. The chaplain gives a sense of security and hope in a crisis.

3. Chaplain involvement in civilian and military support groups needs to become a ministry priority.

4. Family support groups have proved themselves to be excellent grass roots healing stations for returning soldiers, their families and the families of those wounded or killed in action. Reentry into one's family can be one more battle in the war. One family member commented, "The war is over, but the family battle may be just beginning." This can be both good and bad depending on the availability and strength of existing family resources. Grass roots groups in many instances can be more effective than existing institutional services.

5. Family support groups, in many instances, understand better than most that the other heroes of a war are those who hold the family together while the spouse is away. Reentry and assimilation are key elements in the healing process and family support groups bring together people experiencing similar issues to promote healing and reunion. One finds great amounts of mutual respect and love in these groups.

6. Chaplains can provide invaluable leadership, both formal and informal for family support groups since we are functional experts in grass roots ministry. This is especially true when a group is dysfunctional or inept. Chaplains involved in family support groups can educate families in learning to keep, and more clearly understand "religious promises" made during a crisis situation.

7. It is important to stress at this point that future involvement in family support groups should include multiple Unit Ministry Team (UMT) involvement as family members will represent both officer and enlisted personnel.

## **Chaplain Ministry To Casualty Assistance Team Members**

During our involvement in crisis ministry at Greensburg significant ministry was rendered to other team members. This included formal conversations as well as informal play. When team members needed a break they would come to our office, stop us in the hall, or ask us to eat with them. We did the same

in seeking their support during our low moments. A valuable ministry developed with several Casualty Assistance Officers who sought chaplain support as they dealt with the problems of their assigned families related to funerals or other issues.

## **Chaplain Ministry To Honor Guard Personnel**

Ministry to honor guard personnel should not be overlooked as our experience indicated great amounts of pain being experienced by these persons. Significant pastoral care opportunities presented themselves as soldiers relived the deaths of significant others. One Sergeant First Class (SFC) told me that he had to take a day off from burial duty to be with his wife who was reliving the death of her father.

The intensity of multiple burials in a unit results in soldiers grieving for fallen comrades who may or may not be known to the individual. This is especially true for unit members who remain at home station while the unit is deployed. In this arena, those who stay behind experience different levels of survivor guilt.

## **Chaplain Ministry During Homecoming Festivities**

Chaplain ministry during the gladness of homecoming publicly fleshes out the paradox of our roles. In both sorrow and gladness the Chaplain is present. Involvement ranged from participating in a welcoming home motorcade to public and private prayers for the soldiers, their families and the community that gathered to both grieve and celebrate.

During public and private prayers a primary ministry goal is to give permission to both celebrate and grieve at the same time. At the airport this involved the entire community as they, as well as the soldiers and their families were experiencing what they perceived to be conflicting emotions. Freeing people to experience both emotions, and understanding that “letting go, and embracing” are complimentary emotions in a functional paradox that can do much to facilitate the healing process. Usage of this paradox in both public and private prayers is a key crisis military intervention skill.

## **Additional Thoughts and Anecdotes That Emerged From the Greensburg Incident**

1. On 7 March 1991 CH Hamm visited the funeral home in Monnessen, PA to hopefully, in some way assist the family of a deceased soldier. The burial roster indicated that the family had requested no chaplain support during the funeral. After consultation with the family he discovered this was not the case at all and the family was visibly upset about the error. They wanted a chaplain to be involved in their son's funeral. It appears that the CAC Assistant Officer (AO) did not ask the right questions. The AO asked the family if they wanted chaplain assistance and the family advised him that their minister was going to conduct the funeral. The AO then listed this as “No Chaplain support requested.” Two questions should have been asked:



- a. Do you want a military chaplain to conduct the funeral?
- b. Do you want a military chaplain to assist or be present at the funeral?

Asking both of these questions will assist the family, who is already under great stress, and may not know that they have a choice. A chaplain visit to the funeral home prior to the burial averted a potentially embarrassing situation.

## **Religious Medals and Good Luck Charms**

Many of the returning soldiers spoke of the influence God had in their experience. Comments included: "God was watching over us." Another said, "We were spared for a purpose." The 14th QM (WP) experienced, by their report, a resurgence of religious practices including prayer and scripture reading. Others spoke of the religious medals they were wearing as symbols of protection that resulted in their surviving the missile explosion. Many of the returning soldiers displayed "good luck charms" and items given to them by their families and friends. Most had both good luck charms and religious medals. These soldiers were taking no chances.

## **Unit Integrity and Retention Attitudes**

A major concern in regards to the morale of the returning survivors of the 14th QM (WP) unit was how unit was able to care for each other in a situation that held large doses of both unit and personal sorrow and trauma. Mary Tyler, a Behavioral Research Analyst, at Walter Reed Army Research Institute in an unpublished article entitled, "Grief leadership in a Military Community: The Human Side of Mass Casualty Planning" readily captures the Chaplain's concern in this regard. She wrote,

The groups in which people live and work can serve as a powerful force for healing. Though there are individual differences in how people grieve, most grieving people need to talk through their feelings, to compare their own reactions with those of others, and to give and receive expressions of comfort. Informal rituals, such as polishing the boots of a deceased soldier before the memorial ceremony or putting together a scrapbook for a bereaved family, can also facilitate healing. These processes take place naturally in groups where the individual feels safe and accepted—whether this is a family, a group of close friends in the barracks, an elementary school class, or a family support group.



In this regard chaplain ministry interventions noted that while vertical cohesion (Officer to Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) to Enlisted persons), or put another way, influence flowing from the top to the bottom lost some influence as the survivors moved away from official channels to become peer caretakers. Horizontal cohesion or “peer to peer” processing of events and resulting attitudes proved more powerful in gaining a new reality on events. The vertical cohesion was influential at the unit level because there were caring Officers and NCO’s serving in the 14th QM (WP). Survivors banded together because this was their experience.

Almost every soldier interviewed noted the positive influence of a chaplain assistant identified as Sergeant Martinez. Survivors noted that he would meet with them, get out his guitar and lead them in songs. The songs led to personal sharing of feelings about the terrible event that had happened to them. Unit members also had high praise for chaplain involvement in their experiences following the missile explosion. Chaplains were seen as most effective when they met to pray with the survivors. The survivors also deeply appreciated their chaplain’s use of scripture to assist them in accepting the loss of unit members. Chaplain intervention in this situation became very simple—prayer, scripture reading and a loving presence made all the difference in the world to a very scared and emotionally scattered group of soldiers.

## **Concluding Remarks**

It is the hope of this writer that the events and resulting attitudes discussed in this article will stimulate serious thought about future training for Unit Ministry Team intervention in any crisis ministry situation. The format of this article is designed in many cases to provide just enough information to provoke the reader to interject his/her thoughts and experiences into the events of others and to bring a new definition to who we are as the representatives of a good God who does not recognize boundaries of any sort.



# **Crisis Ministry in a Mass Casualty Environment**

**Wayne M. Hoffmann**

Background: Early in January 1991, I was appointed as Task Force leader for the development of UMT guidelines in a crisis ministry environment. We were careful to craft these guidelines to be applicable for ministry even if war was not declared in Southwest Asia. We named the ministry Operation Oasis.

The guidelines that were developed recognized that ministry would take place during four distinct, yet overlapping phases of the conflict: 1) mobilization/pre-deployment 2) deployment 3) conflict 4) re-entry/reunion/de-mobilization and redeployment. Mission essential tasks we identified were listed in five categories: personnel mobilization and management, training, religious services and pastoral care, communication and coordination, and logistical support.

The mass casualties experienced by the 14th Quartermaster Detachment provides us a case study as to how certain of the tasks that had been identified for crisis ministry were applied.

## **Mobilization and Pre-Deployment Phase**

The Reserve Center for the 14th Quartermaster Detachment was located in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, a suburban community southeast of Pittsburgh. The soldiers of the 14th reported to home station and moved directly to Fort Lee, Virginia, which was their mobilization station. They arrived at Ft. Lee with 65 soldiers, received 4 fillers to fill out their complement to 69. They spent over a month in preparation for overseas replacement readiness (POR) and were deployed on the 18th of January.

At Ft. Lee, Chaplain (COL) Stock, the Installation Chaplain, assigned

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Chaplain (COL) Wayne W. Hoffmann, Individual Mobilization Augmentee to the Chief of Chaplain's office is Assistant Chief of Chaplains for mobilization management. He is the President of the Independent Colleges of Northern California and is a minister of the Presbyterian Church USA.

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Chaplain (CPT) Erhart to provide coverage for the 14th during their time in training. This demonstrated good management of chaplain resources for reserve units in the pre-deployment phase. Its value would not be known until the re-deployment stage, when the bonding that had occurred during their pre-deployment became a critical component in "walking-wounded's" transition through Ft. Lee upon de-mobilization.

In the interview with Chaplain Erhart, an older Catholic chaplain, he indicated there was generic religious support during the POR phase. Five or six marriages were performed before the soldiers left. One soldier had become romantically involved with "Mary," but not formally engaged. She was one of two women from the unit who died. The most significant aspect of the chaplain coverage during this phase was the bonding-relationship that was established with Erhart. He reported a total acceptance of him as their chaplain during this POR phase. However, there was little talk about church, God, or anticipation of grief. Erhart celebrated mass before their departure and offered general absolution to the Roman Catholics in the unit. Through Erhart's assignment to the unit, provision of relevant religious and pastoral care was demonstrated.

## **Conflict and Sustainment Phase**

The 14th Quartermaster Detachment (water purification unit), was deployed two days after the air war began. They were located in the rear area and significantly some distance from the battle lines. They had been in country for a month before the ground war began. G-day was the 23d of February. President Bush had given Saddam Hussein until noontime, EST, to withdraw from Kuwait. When no noticeable withdrawal was forthcoming, the President gave the go-ahead to close with the enemy and drive him from Kuwait.

This was the 100 Hour War. . . and half-way through that time, the SCUD was fired upon Dhahran and the 14th became that unit to sustain the greatest amount of casualties in the entire war. Further, it became that unit which sustained the greatest number of casualties within the Quartermaster Corps history!

### **25 February 1991**

On the evening of 25 February, the warhead of a Scud missile which had broken up in flight, landed and exploded on the barracks of the 475th Quartermaster Group near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. A total of twenty-eight people were killed and another 100 identified as wounded. Of those, 13 KIA and 37 WIA were assigned to the 14th Quartermaster Detachment from Greensburg, Pennsylvania.

Chaplain (LTC) Barry Walker, a Presbyterian reserve chaplain assigned to the 475th Quartermaster Group, was the first chaplain on the scene.

The casualty notification process begins when the killed, wounded and missing in action are identified and verified. That message is communicated from the area of operations to Casualty Memorial Affairs Operations Command in Alexandria, Va. and to the Casualty Area Command closest to the hometown of the soldier.



CMAOC assigned a chaplain to minister to the staff and notifiers, Chaplain (COL) Fred Hallanger, retired reservist Lutheran pastor, who volunteered to serve. Hallanger reports that CMAOC notified the Ft. Meade Casualty Area Command at 2230 hours on 25 February 1991. Ft. Meade CAC in turn notified the 99th ARCOM Casualty Assistance Team with a "heads up" that next-of-kin notifiers would be needed for their assets.

Back in Southwest Asia and in the barracks area, Sgt. Rhoads of the 14th, had been requested to assist in the identification of the casualties. When she arrived at Ft. Lee, she wanted to talk about that experience with Chaplain Erhart.

### **February 26th—Tuesday**

Three who had been killed were identified immediately. The notification process reached the 99th ARCO by name on the morning of the 26th. Three next-of-kin notifications were made; two of them were performed with a team which included Chaplain (COL) Joe Staszewski, the ARCOM chaplain. Of the 13 notifications made, chaplains participated in most of them.

Chaplain (COL) Richard Adams and a team from 1st Army, drove from Ft. Meade, Md. to provide a ministry of presence to the 99th at the request of the 1st Army Commander. Adams determined the requirement for one of his staff to be present for an extended period of time, and assigned Ch (LTC) Dennis Hamm, a reservist who had been called to a temporary tour of duty, to represent him in western Pennsylvania.

Family Support Groups in the Greensburg area mobilized to provide immediate family support. The doctrine on family assistance assigns that function to the Army National Guard as the Executive Agent of the Department of the Army. In western Pennsylvania, this assignment was not only received, but also managed professionally and effectively. In addition, a civilian-led family support group developed across service lines. Again from Hamm's report: "Janet Hvizdos, mother of a sailor in the Gulf, a civilian Family Support Coordinator, began marshalling family assistance support on Tuesday. By Friday, March 1, all notified families had been assigned a caretaker family. This group worked in tandem with the CAC notification officer."

Chaplains actively supported the Family Assistance Center, which was managed by the State Area Command. The Ft. Meade Casualty Assistance team arrived at 2030 hours on the 26th. The FAC had already established a 24 hour toll free hotline to assist in providing information to family members.

### **February 27—Wednesday**

The Family Assistance Center held a news conference and confirmed that the 14th QM Detachment Barracks had been hit by a Scud missile. No other information was given to the media. Chaplain involvement in assisting in family notification was actively sought by FAC personnel.

The Ft. Meade Casualty Assistance team went into action. This team

was comprised of the Family Life Center Chaplain, Ch (MAJ) Hall, and three people from Kimbrough Army Hospital: the chief mental health worker, a psychiatrist, and a social worker. A JAG officer was also assigned. A sergeant major and two NCOs also were assigned. No chaplain assistant was designated for temporary duty.

This created an environment of joint component interaction—the One Army in Action—active, reserve and guard—working together on a joint mission. According to Hamm’s report, the team worked well together.

### **February 28th and following—**

One of the mission essential tasks developed for this crisis ministry environment was the importance of maintaining accurate command information and coordination with other helping agencies. The above scenario points out the value of training for that task, with UMTs becoming more familiar with how to access and transmit information critical to good ministry, and working with families who have experienced the losses through mass casualties.

Provision of relevant religious and pastoral care is another mission essential task. It was clearly stated that this included ministry within UMTs, and to other caregivers. During Hamm’s time in Greensburg, significant ministry was rendered to casualty assistance team leaders. Honor guard personnel also comprise another group which needs attention. Conversations with these teams led to many pastoral opportunities as soldiers relived deaths of others, including family members as well as soldiers they had personally known who had been killed.

Chaplain Hamm appropriately notes that the intensity of multiple burials in a single unit results in soldiers grieving for the fallen comrade who may not have been personally known. The thought which was common was, “It could have been me.” In some cases, those who have not been deployed experience survivor guilt.

A memorial service was held on 2 March 1991 at the Greensburg Reserve Center. The 99th ARCOM Chaplain participated in the service.

### **Redeployment/Re-Entry**

The scene now shifts back to Ft. Lee. Let us leave behind, for a moment, the action which continues to take place in western Pennsylvania which includes preparing for the homecoming of 17 survivors of the attack.

The redeployment process is designed for the unit to return to the mobilization station from which it was deployed. As we review this scenario, there is significant value to this design, particularly as it relates to continuity of pastoral care. You recall that Chaplain (CPT) Erhart had been assigned to the 14th before it was deployed, and had bonded with them and performed religious services for them.

The survivors were scheduled to arrive at Langley Air Force Base late in the evening of 8 March. Chaplains Stock and Erhart were present at the base when they arrived. In conversation with Erhart, one soldier remarked that when they de-planed they saw a sea of stars, eagles, and silver and bronze clusters. When they spotted Chaplains Stock and Erhart in the rear of

the reception party, they “saw family.” Curiously, no family members were at the return or the award ceremony the next day.

Pastoral ministry, begun by Chaplain Erhart during the mobilization phase, continued upon the return of the survivors. Erhart had arranged to ride on the bus from Langley AFB to Ft. Lee with the troops from the 14th. During that trip, which took a little over one hour, Erhart engaged in personal conversations with most of the troops. Many spoke of the influence God had in tragedy. Their account ranged from “He was watching over us” to “we were spared for a purpose”. There seemed to be a resurgence of the practice of their religion. Many pointed to religious medals they wore as symbols of protection resulting in their survival. Erhart noted that a high percentage of the unit had participated in Mass before deployment and concluded that many were Roman Catholic.

It was during this very brief time between their arrival at Langley and their departure from Ft. Lee the next day, that Chaplain Erhart was able to pastor with intensive listening. The bond that had been established before their deployment was continued. Anecdotal notes from these conversations follow:

One soldier who was 20 feet away from the impact who only suffered minor wounds, saw a comrade 50 feet away killed . . . he asked, “how come?”

. . . There was a clear concern for those still in the hospital, and anger at the way the after-impact process was handled . . . they hadn’t been able to say goodbye to those who had died. They had been isolated immediately after impact. They were not permitted to come back until the funerals were over. Why couldn’t they do that? They felt cheated not to have experienced formal closure. Some indicated they would make personal rounds of the cemeteries and visit families of the deceased and wounded..

Although there had been a memorial service conducted in Southwest Asia by Chaplain Walker, the survivors still expressed a need and desire to have participated in the funeral and burial services. They expressed a feeling of systems expedition, with minimal concern and sensitivity for the grief process and need for closure on the part of unit survivors.

From this account a training need emerges. Chaplains cannot assume that commanders have knowledge or experience in matters of death and dying. (Nor can we assume that all chaplains are equally trained or experienced.) There comes from this a recommendation that a block of instruction led by the chaplain be incorporated in formal and informal training for commanders.

Chaplain Erhart concluded this part of the account by mentioning the bear-hugs he received from most of the deplaning soldiers. He had difficulty in talking about the emotion he felt then and was feeling at the moment. He had gotten close to the people in that unit, had been accepted, and knew he was providing important and relevant ministry for them during this time of grief.

Two anecdotes support this attribution. A new first sergeant was assigned to the unit four days before it deployed. The “Top” said he felt he’d been a part of the unit a lot longer. He promised Chaplain Erhart he’d bring them all back. Upon return, he confessed to Erhart that he’d broken his promise. Erhart told him that he couldn’t control something from out of the sky. The sergeant thanked him for validating his thoughts; he needed that



reassurance. The second story involves the detachment commander who had been hospitalized a week before the deployment. She did not deploy. Upon return of the unit, she called Erhart requesting a pastoral call. She needed a good shoulder to cry on. Erhart recounts that they both had a good cry. Other staff officers were less sensitive to her grieving, and it became a challenge to Erhart to develop in them a sense of empathy and understanding. This underscores the need for grief training of line officers and NCOs.

## **De-Mobilization and Reunion**

The survivors of the 14th who had returned to Ft. Lee began outprocessing about midnight. The transition point closed shop about 0130 and reopened at 0730. All had concluded their by the time for the recognition event at the headquarters of Ft. Lee.

A homecoming ceremony was held, with appropriate awards and recognitions. Chaplain Erhart gave the invocation and the Commanding General of Ft. Lee bestowed the awards. Some of the soldiers were invited to talk with PAO and the press, with the tone basically being they were glad to be home and alive. Their universal appeal was to get home to their families and hug them.

Documents were double checked whereupon the soldiers were boarded on a bus and taken to the Petersburg, VA airport and flown from there via a C130 provided by the Ohio Air National Guard. They arrived 9 March, 1500 hours at the Westmoreland County Airport in Latrobe, PA, near Greensburg.

The scene shifts back to western Pennsylvania. Welcoming them at the airport were the Commanding General of the 99th ARCOM, the Sgt. Major and Chaplain (LTC) Knoche, an chaplain of subordinate unit of the ARCOM. The local newspaper account began: "A community gathered last Saturday to mourn; this Saturday it will be given an opportunity to rejoice."

On 10 March, a tribute to the 14th was arranged by the family support groups of the area. Keynoter for the event was the Reverend Billy Graham. Chaplain Hamm was the escort officer.

Reunion issues will continue. Mental health representatives continued to interview survivors after their return. Hamm noted that many were tired of being interviewed. They simply requested to be left alone to grieve and get on with their lives. Some did express some anger, after the fact, of being rushed through the medical check at Ft. Lee, recognizing they will have post-traumatic symptoms and healing issues. These matters are still being reviewed.

## **Some concluding comments:**

This story is a serial. There are several chapters which are yet to be written. Interviews with Chaplain Walker about his experience in SWA and what he will experience upon return to the homestation of the unit are important book-ends to this story.

The use of the mission essential tasks to critique the ministry performed during this crisis has been a helpful template. This case study does provide a flow of action and some excellent teaching points for review and instruction.



## **“Pollard’s Pen”:**

### **The Thoughts of a Battlegroup Chaplain**

**J.A.H. Pollard**

While we wait for the provisional ceasefire to become an official end to war there is a strange state of limbo throughout the 3rd Fusilier Battle Group. If it were to be prolonged it would become hard to handle. Sudden inactivity following months of preparation and then an intense if short campaign produces confusion and lack of motivation among even the best soldiers. At the time of writing however this is already being ‘gripped’. Some imaginative schemes are needed to usher in this next and penultimate stage in the Gulf War Crisis. While the question on most soldiers lips is an incessant ‘why can’t the army get us home in a week’? I have to confess I nearly panic at the thought of going home before I am ready. All my personal hopes and thoughts have been coloured since November by the possibility of not surviving the war which I have now, in fact survived. I need time to assimilate all I have experienced. Four months of build up to possible deployment made a large impact on the life of each member of my family. Christmas was overshadowed by imminent departure dates. Then at last we were in theatre. The famous ‘acclimatisation’ period in the port of Al Jubayl had an exciting, almost holiday feel to it, particularly with U.S. Army facilities, burger bars, and ‘BASKIN-ROBBINS’ ice-cream parlours. The desert still seems a long way off.

The arrival of the rains within days of arrival in the first desert training area brought home reality. Nowhere was going to be home for more than four days. We were at the mercy of a brutal climate and worst of all we had left our waterproofs in Germany. Actually one or two of us had been foresighted enough to bring them to Saudi Arabia and stupid enough to back

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The Reverend J. A. H. Pollard is a Chaplain in the British Army who served the soldiers of the United Kingdom during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. This article is published by kind permission of the *Journal* of the Royal Army Chaplains’ Department, Surrey, UK.

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load them as soon as we saw the first rays of the sun. The average annual rainfall in Saudi Arabia is 4.5 inches: most of that fell in the first week. The sand turned to mud. For myself and driver L/Cpl Ed Dean, 3 RRF, the ties with Al Jubayl were longer in the breaking than for most others.

A constant supply of minor casualties and one major accident took us back to 33d Field Hospital on sick-visiting runs, three hours drive south every four or five days. These hospital visits will be remembered by me for the chance to grab a shower and a fresh rations meals, but more significantly for the extra ordinary efficiency of 33d Field Hospital. Here I was able to renew a friendship with a neuro-surgeon from my former unit in Liverpool. I was also able to see a seriously injured member of 3RRF demonstrate the kind of Christian resilience and giving thanks in all circumstances that perhaps we have all seen and been helped by, but never fail to wonder at. Captain Bill Edmunds, a former Regimental Sergeant-Major now Quartermaster, has seen service in Borneo in the 60's and as the 'senior citizen' of the battalion is feared and loved with equal measures by all. He and his driver were both asleep at the wheel when it hit a parked U.S. low loader at around 50 mph. Bill's attitude to his many injuries was inspiring. Broken-hearted at not now being able to go forward with the battalion, he had the right to massive anger and self pity. Instead Bill, who was to undergo several operations over the following months rallied the ward and made frightened young soldiers see the positive side of lying in NBC bags under the bed while awaiting scud missile attacks: "This is an experience which only a couple of hundred people in the world will ever have: it's a privilege: savour it, try and appreciate it." It was hard to let Bill go back on a casevac flight to the United Kingdom. One final comment of his resurfaces in my mind frequently.

The Band of the Scots Guards were doing ward orderly work in 33d Field Hospital. Their courtesy and professionalism at the most menial and intimate tasks won them universal respect from the patients. "They don't make you feel undignified," Bill remembered. It seemed to me that Bill, a practicing Roman Catholic, had identified a style of ministering, without invading a person's individuality, that reflects Jesus' gracious dealing with people. There were two 'Heavenly' places in Al Jubayl: the quiet room at camp 4, an expatriate worker's accommodation area taken over by British Military, and the Red Cross Welfare Tent at 33d Field Hospital. My introduction to the quiet room was on New Year's Eve. Prayers for peace were offered throughout the last hours of the year by a succession of Padres and other Christians. The room contained an album of magazines and press articles on the Gulf Crisis from a religious perspective, both supportive and opposed to military solutions. Always open as a place people could seek solitude, the quiet room was a ministry of silence in a noisy, busy working area. In the Red Cross Welfare tent the ministry was of the 'tea and a cheery smile' variety that met very real human needs for company and conversation. I thank God for both the silence and the chatter.

Of the period between the outbreak of hostilities in mid January and the start of the ground offensive I am writing little in this report. In most ways it was a succession of days that were exactly the same as the day

before and serves only to make us thoroughly adapted to living in the field. It was however a vital phase in the mental and spiritual preparation of soldiers (and this Chaplain) for war. This was the period in which real searching for reasons to hope, and for faith, went on. Fears were faced up to: a need for God was felt and verbalised often by the most 'unlikely' people. It was a humbling, thrilling time to be a minister of the Gospel. I sometimes felt deflated at the thought that many who reached out to God would surely neglect this part of their lives 'once the war was over.' Then I would feel ashamed at this cynicism and continued to believe that like the one leper who returned thanks to Jesus, there would be some lifelong commitments made in the desert. As for the four day ground offensive, which ended only three days ago, I cannot yet write much since I am so close to it all. The number of days fighting is not as relevant as to the intensity of the experience. I remain awed by the professionalism of the Regimental Aid Post with whom I went to the battle. Our driver of the armoured personnel carrier/ambulance did not learn to drive it until November. He sat exposed in the forward hatch without a break of more than a minute or two, nearly continuously on the move at speed, in convoy by day and night, for a period of 40 hours. Our vehicles were sporadically under fire and frequently in heavy rain. His chief sustenance was boiled sweets and chocolate.

On the afternoon of the third day of fighting two of our Warriors were hit by friendly fire from an American A10 Bomber. Nine lives were lost and eleven injured, some seriously. The RAP offered swift and efficient medical aid. The traditional wartime role of the Military Bandsmen was shown to be as crucial today as it has always been.

As a service for the entire Battle Group the following day, the singing of the 23rd Psalm by over a thousand men was a moment of great spiritual power, and, I sensed, the beginning of our healing from the tragedy of these lives cut short, and from the effects of the war itself.





## Operation Friction:

### A Chaplain's View of Canada's Naval Response

**Baxter D. Park**

In the introduction to his delightful book, *Contemporary Images of Christian Ministry*, Donald Messer writes:

Misunderstandings of the meanings of Christian ministry not only exist but they flourish as well. The stereotypical portrait of a pastor as "holy person", a breed apart, oddly different from the rest of humanity, needing special care and treatment, is a traditional heresy. Likewise, the sketch of a pastor as a second-class citizen, deprived of political rights and responsibilities, often emerges. Some even seek to paint all pastors alike—colorless joyless, seeless creatures—as if God used the seminary machinery to create human photocopies.

Messer is effectively articulating one of the most poignant frustrations of the modern day cleric. It is an issue which the chaplain serving the Armed Forces community would grapple with less than his civilian counterpart. As a chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces I have happily noted that the chaplain is not seen as "a breed apart" or as a "second class citizen." Chaplains who wear the same uniform, and do the same basic courses, are treated as members of the team and have the same expectations placed on them as other members of the community. Chaplains are expected to identify with and minister to their people in the context of their work environment.

It was therefore no surprise, when the Canadian Government decided to deploy three ships to the Persian Gulf region, that I was to be included as a member of the crew of the three ships. I had been a sea-going Chaplain for less than a year and had only become the First Canadian Destroyer Squadron Chaplain a month or so earlier. Still, I knew that my primary *raison-d'être* was to go to sea with the men and women of my squadron.

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Chaplain (Padre) Baxter D. Park is a chaplain with the Canadian Armed Forces, and an Anglican clergyman. He was educated at the Queen's Theological College in St. John's, Newfoundland, and is currently Chaplain to the Fifth Canadian Destroyer Squadron in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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It was less than two weeks after the announcement from the Canadian Government that our ships took to sea. The time in between had been used to better prepare our ships for duty in the Persian Gulf region. In particular, this involved removing much of the ship's underwater warfare weapons and replacing it with anti-missile, radar and communication equipment.

This was also a busy time for the chaplain. I spent the time preparing my own personal kit, attempting to familiarize myself with the political issues to which we were responding in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and re-reading a lot of my undergraduate university material on the customs, beliefs, and practices of Islam. I also made a point of visiting all three ships to remind the Coxswain and the Executive Officer that they should have their department heads identifying and landing personnel who might, because of issues in their personal lives, have to be left behind. I also met with a number of personnel who were attempting to have themselves included in this deployment. There were people who were shore posted or posted to other ships who were anxious to be part of this duty which had been named Operation Friction.

In my own personal life, in the quiet moments, I tried to prepare myself spiritually for OP Friction. I also had to inform my own family that I was to be the Protestant Chaplain to the Canadian ships going to the Persian Gulf. This was not an easy task. Neither my mother nor my elderly paternal grandparents, had been supportive of my joining the military chaplaincy. My grandparents had lived through the Second World War and my mother had an older brother serve in Korea. They knew something of the potential danger of this whole situation. I reminded them that I felt that I was being called by God to do this particular duty and that others had been called to do a great deal more than I. I also had to admit to them that I was tremendously excited about this opportunity to serve and I was not afraid. I had been reading and re-reading the first chapter of the book of Joshua and I knew that what God said to Joshua as he was preparing to take over the leadership of the Israelites and lead them into the promised land applied to me as well. God told Joshua to be confident and not afraid. He reminded him that God would never abandon Joshua and He would be with him wherever he went.

Her Majesty's Canadian Ships *Athabaskan*, *Terra Nova* and *Protecteur* left Halifax on August 24, 1990. It was a beautiful day and the crews of the ships were not prepared for the display of support that they received as they sailed out of Halifax. Canadians are not known for their aggressive patriotism but the tens of thousands of flag-waving citizens of Halifax, and her twin city of Dartmouth, who lined the shore on both sides of the harbour seemed unaware of this fact. The mood of the army, air and sea personnel on the ship was festive as they prepared for the month-long journey to the Persian Gulf.

I had been berthed aboard the HMCS *Protecteur* and my Roman Catholic counterpart, LCdr Ron MacFarlane, was sailing in the destroyer *Terra Nova*. *Protecteur* is an Auxilliary Oiler Replenisher. Her varied cargo includes fuel for destroyers and helicopters, provisions, spare parts, annuities, and water for the sustainment of a task group. Medical and dental facilities are provided, as well as work shops capable of effecting repairs for fleet

ships. *Protecteur* was also carrying three Sea King helicopters and was carrying the full supporting air and maintenance crew for these three helicopters and the two that were being carried on *Athabaskan*. These helicopters were tasked with a number of varied jobs, including their transformation into the "Holy Helo" which transferred the chaplains from ship to ship for services.

The ten-day journey across the Atlantic was an opportunity for the ships and their crews to begin the required training for the Persian excursion. The training began with general safety drills which are designed to allow people to know how to respond to shipboard emergencies such as attacks or fires. To the experienced sailors, these drills were familiar, but there were some people who had little naval experience. These included many of the persons in the increased medical detachment and the squad of Royal Canadian Artillery soldiers who had been included in the ship's crew because of their expertise with the Javelin anti-air missile system.

There was also an effort to give everybody a basic first aid training course and some familiarization with casualty clearing. All of these drills allowed the number of the ship's company to cement into the effective team that they were to become. These training exercises were a real opportunity for the chaplain to integrate himself into the ship's crew.

There were also drills that were unknown to almost anyone in the crew. There were the drills that were developed to allow us to become familiar with the equipment and the routine that we would use to combat an attack by nuclear biological chemical weapons. These particular exercises were developed because of our knowledge of Iraq's prior use of the NBC weapons during the Iran-Iraq War. These drills were also effective in allowing people to come to grips with some of the fear they were feeling as they headed toward the Gulf. People who could not or would not admit to any weaknesses were able to communicate to the Chaplain their fear of being caught in a gas attack. I was able to listen to these people express their fear and to offer them the hope and reconciling love of Jesus.

The training schedule was fairly intense. Emergency drills were happening all hours of the day and night. There were a few breaks in the schedule but these were usually filled by the medical people who were holding various 'needle parades' to inoculate us from potential dangers.

On Sundays, however, there was a block of time allocated for a worship service. On *Protecteur*, I celebrated an Anglican Eucharist and music was provided by our Air Maintenance Officer, Captain Don Feltmate. In my homilies, as we were crossing the Atlantic, I tried to emphasize the presence of the God of love among us. We were in a warship going to a potential war zone but the Christian community in the ship were praying for God's gift of peace. Still, we knew also that peace did not just mean the absence of war and so we prayed for those suffering oppression in Kuwait and we recognized that we could be part of a long-term lasting solution in the Middle East.

Our task group proceeded deeper into the Mediterranean heading for an anchorage of Port Said in Egypt. We waited there overnight before proceeding in a convoy of military and commercial ships through the Suez



Canal. It was ironic that one of the ships that accompanied us was an Iraqi oil tanker which was later to be denied access to Iraq by the United Nations blockade.

The passage through the Suez Canal was an exciting time for the personnel aboard our ships. We knew it was a unique experience. The last Canadian ships to go through the Suez had gone during the Second World War. The Suez transit also marked the time when many of our sailors came to grips with the products of war and realized that they were involved in something a little different. As we sailed through the Suez, we could see the reality and the ugliness of war. On the banks were the skeletal remains of numerous military and civilians vehicles which had been destroyed in the battles of the wars between Israel and the Arab nations. Canadian sailors were last involved in combat in Korea in the 1950 (s). Were they going to add a new chapter to Canadian Military history?

A real treat awaited the Canadians at the end of the Suez Canal. The Canadian Embassy had gathered Canadians living in the region and these people were on the shores of the Suez waving huge Canadian flags and cheering and chanting 'Canada.' It was the second time that this task group had seen the evidence that the people of Canada cared about their country and about the welfare of those who served. For many of us aboard the ships it was an overwhelming experience.

The ship's crews were briefed by the Task Group Commander, Commodore Ken Summers. We were to operate in the middle to northern part of the Persian Gulf as part of a United Nations-sponsored economic blockade against the nation of Iraq. This blockade was to prevent any kind of movement of goods or supplies into or out of Iraq and Kuwait. It was clear that our operating position put us within Iraqi missile range but we were fully capable of defending against such attacks. In addition, we would be operating alongside the ships of many other nations and would have additional protection from aircraft overhead, including a Squadron of CF 18 fighter jets which would be stationed in Qatar. The permanent supply base for the three Canadian Ships would be Manama in the island nation of Bahrain.

We proceeded into the Gulf of Oman, through the Straits of Hormuz and into the Persian Gulf. All three ships proceeded to Manama for a port visit with visions of camels, nomads, desert, and tents. We were surprised to find clean, westernized cities bristling with economic activity and providing endless possibilities of shopping, relaxation and recreation. The local people were hospitable and tolerant. I was surprised to find that there were three functioning Christian Churches in Manama. The local Mission to Seamen Chaplain informed me that the ruling Emir was quite anxious for everybody to be able to worship freely in his nation. He had made the point, however, that this freedom of worship excluded the Christian's freedom to evangelize.

After our port visit in Bahrain, the Canadian ships began their mission in the Arabian Gulf. (We had been given the new name by the locals in Bahrain). Each ship patrolled their small section of the Gulf and hailed vessels which came into their section. The hailed vessels were questioned about their port of origin and their destination. They were asked to identify



their cargo and their flag of registry. At those times when the information given was questionable, a boarding party was detached from the ships to conduct a search. During the months of the economic blockade before hostilities broke out in January, the three Canadian ships did twenty-five per cent of these ship hailings. *Protecteur* also had the dual role of being the only supply ship in the northern part of the Gulf. This meant that she did alot of sea replenishments of fuel, not just for the other Canadian ships, but also for the ships of many other nations including the Americans, British, Australians, Dutch and others. The many years of training with the Standing Naval Force Atlantic, where ships of different nations work together and become familiar with one another's routine, definitely paid dividends in the Gulf.

During the months of patrolling, my Roman Catholic counterpart and I had opportunity to leave our 'base ship' and move in to the other ships. In these rare opportunities that we had to actually get together we found our experiences to be similar. The morale among the crews on our ships was excellent. There were moments of tension when crews didn't know if an unscheduled drill was the real thing or not. There were certainly times when the routine was busy and yet boring because of its repetitive nature, but the men and women of our crews were finding the inner strength and the personal stamina to rise to the occasion. We were also delighted with the tremendous opportunities to minister. There were those special moments when casual conversation would move into the deeper realm of prayer. There was always a realization for me that I represented to many of the crew an extension of the caring concerned Church and community that was praying and hoping for their safe return to Canada.

Mail from home was frequent and plentiful during our Gulf deployment. Usually, the mail brought good news and cheer, but occasionally it would contain bad news or bring on bouts of loneliness and homesickness. I found the crews to be supportive of one another at those times and good at approaching me and making me aware of the problems that one of their buddies was facing. I would then seek these people out and be the listener that they needed.

For the crews in the ships the most difficult time for them and their Padre were when I had to pass on vital information that we had received through our ship's message system. It is difficult to tell somebody that her mother has died or that his first son has been born while he is fourteen thousand kilometers away. No matter how faithful the person has been to his or her family and how loyal they are to the service, people still feel intense guilt at being so far removed from their families during crisis. My job was to listen and to give the person the freedom to work through those feelings.

My fondest memories of my time in the Arabian Gulf is related to Christmas. As we approached the season, I heard on numerous occasions how people were not looking forward to Christmas. I understood the anxiety. I shared their disappointment at being away from their families and friends, and yet I saw great possibilities for presenting the Christmas story in a more meaningful way given our circumstances. In a 'Sundown Service' in *Terra Nova* and a "Midnight Mass" in *Protecteur* I conveyed the sense of how

close we were to the first Christmas experience. In terms of climate and geography, we were there. In terms of our feeling displaced and alone, we were like a young pregnant woman and her husband who had to leave their familiar surroundings and their families in order to participate in a government census. In terms of the political climate, it was also similar. Herod had responded to the birth of Jesus by slaughtering innocent children and forcing Jesus and his family to become political refugees.

The Christmas services were uplifting and music was provided by a ship's choir in *Terra Nova* and led by LS Mark Ryan in *Protecteur*. Old Christmas Carols like "I Saw Three Ships on Christmas Day" and "Silent Night" were given new meaning. And I was reminded of Jesus' words to the disciples in John's gospel.

Indeed the hour is coming yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may you peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. (John 16:32,33)

I was gratified when I chatted with one of the wives of a sailor in *Protecteur* who had described the Christmas Service in the Gulf in a letter home. "I was in the worst possible place having the best possible time."

In the middle of December, the Canadian Government announced that the Canadian Ships would stay in the Gulf, but the crews would be replaced by the crews of their sister ships in Canada. The *Protecteur's* crew was the first to be replaced in early January. This rotation was to see *Athabaskan's* crew replaced in February and *Terra Nova's* in March.

I learned in early January that I was to be replaced in the January rotation. I arrived in Halifax, Canada, on the tenth of January. There were mixed emotions. I was happy to be back in Canada, but felt guilty about being among the first to leave and sad to leave our lady, the HMCS *Protecteur*, in the Gulf.

The war against Iraq started six days later, and the rotation of the Crews of *Athabaskan* and *Terra Nova* did not take place. On April 7, 1991, Her Majesty's three Canadian Ships sailed home to a hero's welcome.

I have daily given thanks to God that not a single Canadian died in the action during OP Friction. I am also thankful for the special ministry He has called me to, and I pray that He will always find me worthy.

## **United States Army**

### **Chief of Chaplain's Training Philosophy**

*Editor's Note: The following four articles describe the training philosophy underlying the corps training subjects planned for local installation training for U.S. Army chaplains in FY 1992.*

- I. Mission Essential Task List (METL) Consideration for Battalion Unit Ministry Teams .....John W. Brinsfield
- II. Training For Religious Support to Families in Transition .....Frank J. Spang
- III. The Importance of Training Chaplains to Supervise At the Brigade Level .....James W. Daniels, Jr.
- IV. Volunteerism in the Chapel.....John H. Barnes  
Granville E. Tyson





## **Mission Essential Task List (METL) Consideration for Battalion Unit Ministry Teams**

**John W. Brinsfield**

### **Introduction**

The battalion Unit Ministry Team (UMT) occupies one of the most important positions in the Army for carrying out the chaplaincy's total religious support mission. In performing and providing for direct daily ministry to soldiers and their family members, the battalion UMT defines the front line of religious support in both peace and war.

In the garrison environment the battalion UMT performs both chapel and field duty religious support, frequently with a large number of worship, individual and family counseling, and staff duties. One chaplain in the 3d Armored Cavalry regiment reported more than 1,000 hours spent in direct soldier ministry in one year, including 863 counseling sessions and troop visitations.

During deployment and initial combat operations, battalion UMT's move to forward positions with their units and provide ministry under extremely difficult and often dangerous conditions. In combat logistical base areas battalion UMTs perform critical religious support tasks for units whose mission involves round-the-clock reinforcement and resupply of the fighting force. With the advanced technology of modern warfare there is no "safe" area on the battlefield. Each battalion UMT must train to perform their religious support tasks regardless of location to ensure maximum success and survivability.

A review and analysis of U.S. Army chaplaincy combat history reveals a remarkable record of courage and professionalism on the part of battlefield UMT's. For example, all five of the chaplains who were awarded the Congressional Medal of honor were serving as regimental or battalion-

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Chaplain (LTC) John Brinsfield is a United Methodist chaplain who serves in the Forces Command Staff Chaplain's office in the area of Personnel and Ecclesiastical Affairs. He holds a Ph.D. from Emory University.

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level chaplains. Many chaplain assistants who have won silver or bronze stars were also serving at the battalion level.

Nevertheless, without effective and thorough training, the most committed and courageous UMT will not be prepared to go to war. A good deal of training and learning takes place during combat operations, but formal training resources, to include manuals and reference books, are scarce or non-existent. Therefore tough, realistic training of UMT's prior to deployment is both a mission and an ethical imperative. Moreover, much of this training must be done with the assigned battalion so that the UMT can know, understand, and function with their unit in combat.

## **Mission Essential Task Lists (METLs)**

The Army regards Mission Essential Task Lists as indispensable tools for combat training. Field Manual 25-101, *Battle focused Training*, defines a METL as "an unconstrained statement of tasks required to accomplish wartime missions." Commanders determine their units' METLs based on war plans and external directives which include anticipated wartime missions, operating plans, and contingency plans. Battalion commanders ensure that staff, supporting slice, and company METLs are properly coordinated, tailored to meet any special operational requirements, and understood by all soldiers and leaders as applicable to the specific unit.

METLs are derived for contingency missions that are planned for the unit. Many units have multiple projected missions of world-wide scope.

METLs are used to battle-focus training. METLs also influence training management in planning, resourcing, executing, and assessing unit training and readiness.

For each major unit mission there is a unit METL.

The battalion UMT METL is coordinated through the S1 to form part of the commanders battle staff METL for each unit mission. With each subsequent mission, the commander and staff may develop a new METL or utilize an existing one which ever applies to that specific mission.

It is important that the battalion UMT fully understand and participate in the METL development process with their battalion staff and commander for the purposes of UMT credibility, planning and resource allocation. METL development reinforces UMT integration with the battalion's plans, missions, leaders, and to be truly part of the unit they serve.

## Training for Religious Support To Families In Transition

Frank J. Spang

*All happy families are alike but each unhappy  
family is unhappy in its own way.*

*Tolstoy*

### Ministry in a Transition-Rich Environment

The task is absolutely clear: provide religious support to families as the Army "builds down." One answer is as clear: we must keep on developing and implementing effective programs meeting the religious needs of families. However, to "keep on keeping on" will become more difficult as the Army meets its targets for a smaller force. While we always have had a small number of families on the verge of leaving the Army community, we will, over the next few years, have a much larger proportion of "unhappy families," distressed by important and far reaching adjustments. As a result, we face two questions: 1) How to modify our programs to succeed in a dramatically changing environment? and 2) What new religious support programs will serve those selected for the Army Career and Alumni Program or ACAP?

The answers rest at least in part in training Unit Ministry Teams to deal with families in a transition-rich Army. The Office of the Chief of Chaplains has held training sessions on the transition for MACOM staff; similar training is part of Chaplain Officer Basic and Advanced Courses. However, installations must train chaplains, chaplain assistants, DA civilians who are part of the chaplaincy's mission staff, volunteers, and parish leaders to provide appropriate religious support in this environment.

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Mr. Frank J. Spang is a civilian employee of the US Army Chaplain Center and School. Since 1982 he has been a project officer in the Course Development Division with primary responsibility for exportable training programs.

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## **Family Life in a Downsizing Army**

Before attempting to answer these questions, we need to lay out the impact of the downsizing on families. The Army will maintain support to families at current levels even as the number of families declines; so in the long run, the prognosis for families remaining within the Army environment is good. In the short run, the outlook for everybody is difficult, even for those who remain. We must look for the effects on families caused by:

- Uncertainty
- Turbulence
- Increased workload
- Alienation
- Changing of relationships

### **Uncertainty**

Families should feel the uncertainty already. Rumors of cuts and closures are rife. The briefings which herald the downsizing began before Operation Desert Shield, and have reached all parts of the Army community: soldiers, families, and civilian employees.

Publicity attendant with the Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) fills the local and base papers. Each BRAC list is accompanied by the warning that there will be a next list. The ACAP has sought to be open and above board with the process. Selective Early Retirement Boards (SERBs) are on the horizon for officers and legislation has been introduced to permit SFCs with 21 years of service to withdraw. This openness has its flip side in that everybody feels at risk. Operation Desert Shield bought a six-month delay in the outset of force reductions but we know that it was only a delay.

Nobody will escape the impact of these changes. All are at risk. The scope of the downsizing is such that one out of four soldiers and a similar number of civilian employees will be employed somewhere else in three years. Since the Army will be reducing the force on an individual by individual basis rather than by units, its effects will spread into every corner of the Army.

### **Turbulence**

The transition briefings borrowed the phrase "permanent white water" to describe the prevailing atmosphere. It is probably accurate. We have used the word transition to mean leave the Army. There will be, however, many more transitions within the Army as units, bases, and activities are closed and individuals relocated to replace others who leave. A temporary increase in the rate of PCS moves at least for some individuals is a probability as the Army consolidates individuals into effective units. Turbulence will affect everybody, including officers, enlisted, NCOs, and civilian employees. In turn, families are caught in the turbulence.



## **Increased Workload**

A smaller Army won't necessarily mean fewer missions. There is a tendency to hold on to missions even when the personnel to accomplish them are no longer there. For a number of years there will be fewer and fewer people attempting to do the same amount of work, providing numerically the same level of religious support, running the same number of training exercises, and writing the same number of decision papers. This will be especially true as upper echelon organizations are cut and their missions are pushed down on to lower ones.

For example, downsizing the Chaplain School will mean more training at local levels just at the same time when local UMTs are being cut and the need for religious support to families in transition is increasing. Adjusting to a new, smaller Army which can't and doesn't need to generate the same number of mission accomplishments will take a while.

## **Alienation**

It is important to realize that those good things about Army life are those which are going to make this process so difficult. While we have always had QMPs (quality management programs) and there are those among us who remember the RIFs after the Vietnam War. When an organization which enshrines "selfless service" and sense of community begins to make cuts, the cuts hurt. The corporate culture of the Army is rooted in interdependence, and reducing the force by other than attrition tears at that interdependence. ACAP itself is an attempt to deal with this by marshaling the resources of the Army to assist those who must leave. ACAP goes beyond the outplacement assistance given by corporations to individuals laid off.

How it hurts. Individuals losing civilian jobs can usually preserve some of the pillars which support their lives. In some cases the transition is merely from doing a job with one employer to doing the same thing for another employer. Sometimes a worker can choose to remain in the same area but begin another kind of work. Very seldom will a worker have to both move and change fields of work at the same time. In most cases soldiers who leave the Army face geographical and employment transitions.

The risk here is alienation, both of those transitioning and those remaining. To some degree everybody involved must make the break. It is inevitable that interpersonal and organizational connections must be severed to some degree. The paramount concern for the Army is to limit the destructive effect of hostile alienation on the organization. Those who are leaving must come to see the transition as being something better with promising new opportunities. Those who are staying must recover their balance and their faith in the organization.

## **Changing Relationships**

The human dimension in this process will be in the changes in relationships. Every organization will experience a surge in retirements and farewells.

Organizing and facilitating these changes so that they become productive experiences rather than destructive ones will be a real challenge. The experience of losing a job often makes people pull away from others. It is almost always perceived as a badge of shame. The Army's intention of using "quality indicators" as guidelines for making cuts will intensify these feelings. We all know how difficult the "passover" can be and how strained relationships become when this happens. We will all experience more of these difficult situations.

## **Impact on Existing Programs**

Each of these effects of the transition-rich environment will put a different spin on existing programs for religious support to families. For example, we can anticipate that the number of troubled families in the American community will increase as uncertainty increases. Unevenness of the workload will cause neglect of family life and increased incidence of burnout. Abusive behavior will, inevitably, become more common among those at-risk families who face the additional stress of transition. At the same time these troubled families will tend to pull away from the organization's sources of help. We need to put increased emphasis on those services and events which pull the community together and to watch carefully those individuals who turn inward, alienated completely from those sources of support which can help them through a difficult time.

One consequence of the build-down will be an increased importance of religious support programs. The largest challenge will probably be to construct programs which will be accepted by those who need them.

## **On New Programs**

For a few years we will all have to get used to a rash of farewells, particularly for those who don't want to say goodbye. We will all have to say a few words of benediction, be sensitive to those who are leaving and those who are staying. We need to discover programs which ease the transition and point out the promise of new directions without demoralizing those who are remaining with the Army.

Pastoral counseling for those who are leaving should probably be done in groups in order to cut through the feelings of guilt and isolation. The process of making the break from the Army community probably is parallel to stages an individual who has experienced a personal loss. The stages are inevitable but support groups help individuals work through the grief.

The chapel community is a logical source of support for those in "permanent white water;" however, the chapel community has to be trained to help each other through the transition process and organized so that its help is extended to those who need it. It is unfortunate that, in many cases, the common reaction to someone who is being compelled to leave the Army is an embarrassed silence and a progressively increasing personal distance. Our reactions frequently communicate it is the individual's fault or the individual has something contagious. If we are all going to survive, we will

have to learn a new set of reactions to those who are leaving the Army. The UMT has to make a conscious effort to organize the community to be a source of consolation, comfort, and help as individuals and families make their way through troubled waters.

### **Training for Ministry in a Transition-rich Environment**

If the UMT, DA civilians, and volunteers are to provide this support, they will need training: to provide assistance to those leaving the Army and to adjust to the new environment. Leaders and training managers must analyze the local situation and develop effective programs.





# The Importance of Training Chaplains to Supervise at the Brigade Level

James W. Daniels, Jr.

## Introduction

The brigade chaplain must understand both the art and the craft of supervision. Formal training will teach the principles of supervision. This is the craft of supervision. Informal training develops the personhood of the chaplain. Personhood affects the practice of supervision, which is the art. One is not successful without the other. This paper is a discussion of the importance of training chaplains to supervise at the brigade level.

## Staff Responsibility

The Principles of Staff Organization assign the brigade chaplain staff responsibility and staff authority.<sup>1</sup> Reference Book 1-1 (RB 1-1), *The Unit Ministry Team (UMT) Handbook*, states that “the chaplain exercises delegated authority through supervision.”<sup>2</sup> Supervision is one of the key leadership competencies that is developed in FM 22-100 *Military Leadership*. The brigade chaplain’s staff responsibility is to supervise battalion level UMTs. The success of the brigade chaplain will depend upon learning the skills of supervision. It is important that chaplains train to supervise at the brigade level.

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Chaplain (MAJ) James W. Daniels, Jr., is currently an instructor/writer in the Department of Military Ministries at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, Fort Monmouth, NJ. He is a United Methodist, with a B.A. and MBA from West Virginia Wesleyan College, and a M.Div. from Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor ME.

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<sup>1</sup>Field Manual 101-5, *Staff Organization and Operations*, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1984), Chapter 2.

<sup>2</sup>Reference Book 1-1, *The Unit Ministry Team (UMT) Handbook*, (Fort Monmouth, N.J.: The United States Army Chaplain Center and School, 1990), p. 2-3.

## The Position

FM 100-5 *Operations* states that “Brigades combine the efforts of their battalions and companies to fight engagements and to perform major tactical tasks in division battles. Their chief tactical responsibility is synchronizing the plans and actions of their subordinate units to accomplish a single task for the division or corps.”<sup>3</sup> FM 16-1 *Religious Support Doctrine* states “the supervisory chaplain is the staff chaplain at brigade or higher level commands.”<sup>4</sup>

The brigade is the first major echelon of command that provides command and control to many types of units. The brigade chaplain is the first supervisor in the UMT technical chain that can direct the diverse UMT assets found with these units.<sup>5</sup> FM 22-100 states that a leader must supervise.<sup>6</sup> Supervision ensures the accomplishment of the task.

## A Key Task

Implementing the Religious Support Plan is a key task of the brigade chaplain. The brigade chaplain combines the efforts of the battalion UMTs when implementing the Religious Support Plan. The brigade chaplain synchronizes the plans and actions of the battalion level UMTs through supervision.

## The Responsibility

The brigade chaplain as a supervisor has responsibility for a special type of leadership which involves the control of human resources. Supervision is the process of management which controls and evaluates the people, resources, and activities in the accomplishment of the goal or mission. Leadership is not so much a function of status or authority as it is of the quality of the relationship, the interaction that takes place between the leader and his followers. Leadership is a matter of influence. Supervision is a process that incorporates both the competencies of leadership and the functions of management.

## The Art of Supervision

Supervision is both an art and a craft. Informal training develops the art of supervision. This training formulates the battalion chaplain's “Be” from the “Be, Know, Do” leadership model. The informal training is the actual supervisory relationship that the battalion chaplain experiences. The brigade chaplain is responsible for that experience. Inappropriate supervision by the brigade chaplain will not give the battalion chaplain the correct training and

<sup>3</sup>Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1986), p. 184.

<sup>4</sup>Field Manual 16-1, *Religious Support Doctrine: The Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant*, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1989), p. 3-12.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3-15

<sup>6</sup>Field Manual 22-100, *Military Leadership*, (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1990), p. 67.

experience needed to learn the art of supervision. Practicing the art of supervision also depends upon learning the craft of supervision.

## **The Craft of Supervision**

Formal training develops the craft of supervision. Formal training teaches the principles of supervision, the functions of management and the competencies of leadership in the training environment. Chaplains attend many professional development courses to receive formal training. The Chaplain Officer Advanced Course is a course for learning the craft of being a brigade chaplain. The chaplain cannot practice the art of supervision without learning the craft of supervision. Brigade chaplains cannot “Do” if they do not “Know.”

## **The Variables**

The brigade chaplain practices the art and craft of supervision within the context of four variables: the personality of the supervisor, the personality of the group, the situation, and the organizational factors.

### **The Personality of the Supervisor**

The personality of the supervisor, or personhood, is the first important variable. The supervisor’s personality includes a personal and professional philosophy which defines the art of supervision. This philosophy includes the basic assumptions that we make about others. These assumptions come from our education, experiences, background, and theology. The chaplain’s philosophy evolves with new knowledge and experience.

The brigade chaplain can learn about how to be a pastor, a chaplain, and a staff officer. The concept of personhood determines how the chaplain will practice the art of supervision. The chaplain does not learn personhood in formal training. Each chaplain has a unique patterning of abilities, skills, attitudes, habits, past experiences, perceptions, values, and interests. Each has peculiar sensitivities, preferences, aversions, blind spots, and likes and dislikes. The make-up of the chaplain, the personhood, will determine how the chaplain will practice the art of supervision. There is no mold from which all are cast. There is no one right way to supervise.

### **The Personality of the Group**

The personality of the group, the UMT, is the second important variable for developing the chaplain as a supervisor. The group implies relationships. The chaplain can learn the principles of basic human interactions. Further insight into the dynamics of the UMT comes through application of experience, knowledge, and personhood. A resentful, hostile group will require a different style of supervision than a well-intentioned and friendly group. Supervisory techniques that may be successful with one UMT, may prove disastrous with another UMT. There is no one right way to be a supervisor.



## **The Situation**

The situation is the third variable. The situation can call for different styles or skills of supervision. Whether the situation is a high stress crisis or a casual meeting, the formal training remains constant. How the supervisor perceives the situation determines how the supervisor applies the principles of supervision. The supervisor must accommodate supervisory skills to the demands of the situation, not expect that the situation will meet the premises of the supervisor. This seems so obvious that it is astonishing how often supervisory chaplains overlook it. If not on guard, the supervisors will follow habitual ways. The brigade chaplain who relies upon familiar patterns will forget the craft of supervision and will distort the art.

## **The Organizational Factors**

Organizational factors, the fourth variable, will determine the application of supervision. Every military unit has its own unique history, traditions, taboos, and unwritten rules of conduct; these often change with the commander. Organizational factors will affect how the supervisor practices the art. It is not necessary for the supervisor to either agree or approve of such organizational factors (e.g. being an apologist for war). Sensitivity to the organizational factors will determine the success of the brigade chaplain as a supervisor.

## **The Interaction of the Variables**

It is clear from this discussion that thinking of supervision in terms of absolutes is largely futile. It is wiser to think of supervision in terms of the interaction of several variables. The formal training the brigade chaplain receives teaches the specifics of the craft of supervision. It is the "know" of the "Be, Know, Do" leadership model. Mentoring the battalion chaplain is informal training. This training forms the "Be" for the brigade chaplain. It is the art of supervision. Bad supervisory practices will beget bad experiences. It is important to recognize how the "Know" affects the formulation of the "Be" and the successful implementation of the "Do." Training is important to the successful application of the skills of supervision by the brigade chaplain.

## **Conclusion**

The brigade chaplain as a supervisor must think of on-the-job supervision as a pattern of strategies, each implemented by appropriate tactics. Formal training alone tends to ignore the permutations and combinations of things, events, people, pressures, and so on that characterize life in any organization. Successful brigade chaplains combine the formal training with their personhood. This is a combination of the craft of caring skills with the art of caregiving. One is not successful without the other. It is important to train chaplains to supervise at the brigade level.



## Volunteerism in the Chapel

John H. Barnes  
Granville E. Tyson

### I. Theology of the Equipping Pastor/Chaplain

Throughout the Army chaplaincy committed lay persons in countless chapels are exercising their God-given ministry. Desert Shield serves as an example of these committed people: people who taught Bible studies, participated in family support groups, visited homes, etc. Ministry/volunteers have proven their worth again. They are here to stay.

God works through these “stalwarts” in a unique way to help others. The effective lay minister/volunteer is gaining momentum in our military chapels as well as in the civilian parishes. Each member has a special function and a unique contribution to make. We are knitted close together. All the members of the Church depend on one another and subsequently function adequately.

#### **Pastor/Chaplain is the Key**

The pastor/chaplain is the “equipper” of the parishioner. The secret of a well-mobilized laity lies in the chaplain, the chaplain assistant, the parish council and the director of religious education (DRE) who recruit, encourage, and train. These servants function as the ligaments that coordinate the body (see Ephesians 4:16). The primary equipper is the pastor/chaplain (see

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Chaplain (MAJ) John H. Barnes is assigned to the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School in the Course Development Division of the Directorate of Training. He holds degrees from Western Baptist Seminary in Portland, Oregon, and Fuller Seminary, Pasadena, California. He is endorsed by the Assemblies of God.

Chaplain (MAJ) Granville E. Tyson is editor of the *Military Chaplains' Review*. He holds degrees from Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, and Princeton Theological Seminary; he is a United Methodist clergyman.

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Ephesians 4:11,12). The pastor/chaplain leadership role is indispensable. Their task of mobilizing unpaid leaders and potential leaders is especially critical. Without such coordinating efforts the chapel will flounder.

A particularly important passage for both chaplain and ministry volunteer to understand is Ephesians 4:11,12. The whole context of this verse manifests the essential oneness and wholeness of the Church. "And He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry (diakonia), for the upbuilding of the body of Christ." The last sentence is of notable importance. Since "diakonia" is translated "ministry", it recognizes a special category of people with a unique function, "the ministry". It recognizes all the saints, i.e. all the members, as being ministers, servants to the upbuilding of the Church. The emphasis is upon the equipping of the saints for ministry. The Church as a whole stood under the same commitment as its Lord, i.e., "servanthood".

### **What is the Equipping Ministry?**

The essence of equipping people is to do whatever is necessary to prepare and release members of the congregation for ministry in the church and in the world. This is done in such a way that people are brought into the kingdom, strengthened in their faith, and moved toward maturity in Christ.

The means for equipping are:

1. **RELATIONAL:** God gives gifts and calls persons to be used in the context of community. Equipping puts a priority on relationships.
2. **INFORMATIONAL:** God gives us His Word as a means to understand who God is. What He is about in the world. Who we are and what we are to be about in the world. Equipping puts a priority on the study, integration and implementation of God's Word.
3. **EMPOWERING:** God bestows, implants and imparts His Spirit into our lives in order that we might be changed more and more into Christ's image.

The equipping pastor/chaplain is one who enables and empowers the people of God to be in ministry. He/she accomplishes this by adopting a style of leadership and ministry which allows for and encourages shared ministry owned by ALL the laity rather than the clergy alone.

The equipping Pastor/Chaplain must have:

1. A commitment to discipleship and equipping.
2. A commitment to share the vision.
3. A commitment to share the ministry.
4. A commitment to relationship and task.
5. A commitment to apprenticeship vs scholarship.
6. A commitment to all members as gifted and called.
7. A commitment to balance people needs with program needs.
8. A commitment to "being with."
9. A commitment to prayer and study.
10. A commitment to be intentional in all we do.

The equipping congregation is organized in such a way that the members are recruited, trained, prepared, released, and mobilized for volunteer ministry in the church and in the community. The DRE can serve immeasurably in helping accomplish this task. The commitments of the equipping congregation are:

1. To allow the pastor to be an equipper.
2. To pay the price to be equipped.
3. To structure the church for ministry rather than maintenance.
4. To be outward looking rather than inward focused.
5. To allow the Holy Spirit to direct and empower ministry.

The process of becoming an equipping congregation is to be a pastor/chaplain who equips; be a people who are equipped, and be a people who equip others. The delivery system(s) for this process are:

1. Training events
2. Internships
3. Consulting
4. Networking and informal conversations.
5. Preaching

The pastor/chaplain/equiper is one “who actively sets goals for a congregation according to the will of God, obtains goal ownership from the people, and sees that each church member is properly motivated and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the goals.”<sup>1</sup> This is key to church growth and person growth. Leadership captures concepts, visions and the overall direction for the church. Effective church leadership accurately perceives where the people in the congregation are now, and what their potential is for the future. Leadership takes steps then to motivate them to move ahead and become all that God wants them to be.

How does the chaplain do this? How does a pastor equip the congregation in a systematic intentional manor? How can a pastor/chaplain apply this practically and pragmatically within the military? Is it through preaching, counseling, visitation, building relationships and prayer? Yes, it is and more. But there is a need for a “shared life,” “mentoring,” “discipleship,” on a smaller scale. An ancient proverb says: “I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand.” Jesus’ disciples watched him at work, they worked with him, they questioned him, they went out in pairs to practice what they had learned, they reported back, they asked more questions and received further instruction and slowly they learned about the Kingdom of God.

This is equipping at its best, when deep relationships are formed within a small group. The bottleneck of the clergy-laity dichotomy is the difficulty of the clergy to trust the volunteer ministers with ministry and of the laity to trust themselves. What I am going to suggest is that the pastor/chaplain provide that structure for deep, accountable relationships within his/her area ministry and responsibility. Attitudes of trust, respect, and appreciation reinforced with training, communication, prayer and accountability need to be present.

<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Peter C., *Leading Your Church to Growth*, p. 79.



Essentially the equipping pastor/chaplain is one who enables and empowers the people of God to be in ministry by adopting a style of leadership and ministry which allows for and encourages shared ministry. This involves time for believers who want to be disciplined and released for ministry. Therefore, the pastor/chaplain must have a plan for equipping volunteer ministers which can vary in time depending upon the soldiers assignment.

## II. Managing Ministry Volunteers.

As we confront the reality of reduction of forces in the next few years in our military services, one of the first issues we will deal with is the shrinking pool of ministry volunteers available for community and chapel ministry. If we hope to keep our ministries even at their current levels, we will have to be more efficient in utilizing these servants.

As pastor/chaplains, we hold the theological high ground in encouraging volunteerism in our chapel communities. We have great theological precedents from the early Christian church. Peter, in the pastoral epistles, before the time of professional ministries, spoke of volunteer service. He said "Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God." (1 Peter 4:10 TEV)

Paul in Romans urged us that "having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (12:6-8 RSV)

### Problems of Volunteer Organizations

While volunteerism is as American as apple pie, and is integral to our theology of the equipping ministry, the process of recruiting and retaining a good corps of ministry volunteers is difficult. Many congregations both inside and outside the military are increasingly dependent upon a small cadre of volunteers who do most of the work in the chapel or community organization. Most of the organization or congregation remain fairly uninvolved. A 25% reduction of forces could reduce that small group of workers even further.

Added to that is the large number of 2-income families and the lack of time available for volunteer activities, or the single parent who has little spare time for ministry, and the supply of workers diminishes even more.

Marlene Wilson, one of the authorities in the field of volunteerism says leadership is our most crucial problem.<sup>2</sup> There is little delegation, almost no shared decision-making, lackluster enthusiasm from the congregation for decisions they had no input into, and burned-out, overworked, church leaders.

Climate of the organization is important. Is the chapel open and

<sup>2</sup>Wilson, Marlene, *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers*, p. 7.



friendly, or cold and foreboding? Several climatic factors affect ministry volunteers; some of these are relationships, rewards, warmth and support, handling conflict, and expectations. A volunteer ministry doesn't turn on one factor, but requires many positive characteristics to work properly.

## **Successful Programs**

Successful ministry volunteer programs are run by leaders who understand the needs of the volunteer, and who work to meet those needs. They have been identified as the eight aspects of volunteering: (1) the work is based upon interest and commitment; (2) the work is emphasized as a personal ministry; (3) ministry volunteers should be recognized for their good work; (4) they must be trained; (5) their tenure must be time-limited; (6) flexible and creative use of their time is a must; (7) ministry volunteers are treated as insiders; (8) they get to know the pastor or leader better. Some organizations have built these eight aspects into a "Volunteers' Bill of Rights," which the successful organization carefully observes.<sup>3</sup>

Recruiting ministry volunteers can come from two directions: enlistment or motivation. Most successful volunteer organizations operate from the motivational approach, which offer more effective approaches to recruitment when appealing to the higher instincts of the potential volunteer.

Motivational approaches frequently speak to the ability of the volunteer to make a difference in his world, by taking on this particular job. Others may discuss it in terms of doing something worthwhile and meaningful. Another approach is to appeal to the sense of religious duty to God and others; while others suggest volunteering is a good way to make a contribution of time and talents.

Volunteer work can be meaningful for those who become involved. There are those who are waiting to volunteer for a project that fits their likes and qualifications. When we fail to ask for volunteers for a task we have available, we thwart the ministry of volunteerism.

## **Management of Volunteer Programs.**

Once a volunteer program is in place, management techniques become critical. However, these techniques are not the same as military management by command and control. The most effective management centers around the needs of the volunteer who is offering his or her time. Marlene Wilson reports that of the hundreds of volunteers her organization interviewed, their overwhelming response to the question "Why did you leave the last place you volunteered?" was "I never knew what they wanted me to do; I didn't even have a job description."<sup>4</sup>

Some churches have established a position of coordinator of ministry volunteers, who works as a liaison between the church leaders and pastor, and the congregation. This frees up time for the pastor to attend to important pastoral duties.

Once the volunteer is recruited and given a task, the management must

<sup>3</sup>Johnson, Douglas W., *Empowering Lay Volunteers*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup>Wilson, op.cit., p. 46.

not cease. Stories abound where volunteers were giving no training for the task, had no job description, and were given no assignments. Frequently the pastor or leader of the volunteer organization, reluctant to give up work to others, took over the assignments. This kind of mismanagement can kill a volunteer program quickly. But staying in touch with the volunteer and assisting him or her when help is needed is key to good management. Moreover it leads into the last and most important management area: evaluation and reward. Evaluation, perhaps the most neglected, is important because it provides opportunities to highlight excellent work, as well as opportunities for self-improvement. Evaluation of the project apart from the individuals' roles, is important to the leadership of the chapel. Was this worthwhile? Did it meet ministry needs? How will this affect next year's planning process?

The chaplain who is prepared to recruit, train, and manage chapel volunteer groups will be better equipped to deal with the force reduction effect on his congregation in the years ahead.

Johnson, Douglas W., *Empowering Lay Volunteers*, from Schaller, Lyle E., ed., *Creative Leadership Series*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1991.

Wilson, Marlene, *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers*, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1983.

Wagner, Peter C. *Leading Your Church to Growth*, Regal Books, Ventura, California, 1984.

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## Book Reviews

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### U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches

*Tex Sample*

***Westminster/John Knox Press 1990 Soft cover, 156 Pages, \$12.95***

Tex Sample is professor of Church and Society, at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Missouri.

The main focus of "U.S. Lifestyles and Mainline Churches," is the diversity of lifestyles among the 76.4 million baby boomers in the U.S., whose lifestyle vastly differs and is often in conflict with those of their parents. Two events shaped the lifestyles of people prior to 1946, the great depression and World War II.

These two events drove Americans deeper into the ethic of self-denial that was prevalent in this country for over two hundred years. There are three parts to self denial: the understanding that one denies self for the secure well being of family, the postponement of immediate gratification for long term gain, and the need for respectability.

January 1, 1946 at one second after midnight marked the beginning of the boom in the birth rate in U. S. that lasted until 1964. This generation has greatly influenced our society because today many things are focused towards them. The lives of baby boomers are shaped by the events of the sixties and seventies, such as hypocrisy in government, double standards in the life of America, the civil rights struggle, three assassinations of leaders, the Viet Nam war, the Arab oil embargo, the decline of the U.S. economy, and violence on television.

The lifestyle and ethic of boomers is one of self-fulfillment. There is a yearning for the intrinsic value that's not always rooted in religion. Self-fulfillment ethic is a life that is creative, and emotionally expressed. Another characteristic of this ethic is the belief that it's ones moral obligation to seek wealth and affluence.

Baby boomers are composed of three basic groups, the cultural left, right and middle. The author claims that over two thirds of these individuals are not of the church. The majority of them were reared in the church. Mainline churches, states the author, have the greatest chance or potential to reach boomers. However, to accomplish this undertaking, mainline churches need to change their conventional thinking and concepts of ministry.

The cultural left make up about 33 million people and are mostly children of affluence, who have rejected the lifestyle of their parents and the status quo. They believe in doing what is best or right for themselves. Cultural left persons are experimental in nature and are greatly influenced by issues around peace and justice. Politically they are liberal and theologically, cultural left see life as a journey. Every experience is an opportunity for growth and change.

The culture right makes up about 20 million individuals. Economically these persons are mostly blue collar workers, are very traditional in orientation and place a lot of value on family, neighborhood or community, love of country and conventional mortality. Cultural right people believe in folk theology where story telling from the scripture carries the truth. They believe in feeling one's religion and the providential existence of God in their lives. The cultural right churches are evangelical, fundamental and charismatic denominations.

The cultural middle are the successful/winners, strivers and conflicted. This group of boomers compose of about 23 million individuals who are the best-educated. Their lives are consumed with making it in their careers, by their individualistic attitudes and self-centered behavior. To the cultural boomer, self worth is determined by success, not grace. Because these persons are often so motivated, their lives are void of family ties, friendships, and relations with their maker.

The cultural middle represents the greatest challenge for ministry and they have the greatest potential leadership to offer the church. Cultural middle people are often very busy. If they are to be reached by the church then they must be challenged by a theology that is explanatory and akin to the business world. The church must also relate to these people by being efficient and brief, through a quality program and a sense of accomplishment of boomers time and energy.

To minister to these three groups the pastor needs to get to know them, see them as God's children who are hungry and thirsty for grace and to listen to them so that we might learn to speak their language. This book is very informative, insightful and refreshing. It is worth reading.

**Chaplain (MAJ) Samuel B. Cooper**  
**U.S. Army**



# Combat Crew

*John Comer*

*William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1988*

***Hard Cover, 288 pages, \$16.95***

John Comer is a former flight engineer and top turret gunner of B 17's. He is also a retired marketing executive.

Mr. Comer's book is written from an enlisted flight crew perspective. He describes the experiences that he encountered during World War II flying B-17's on his first tour on raids to Germany, France, Belgium. He took part in many of the heavy raids on Germany including the Schweinfurt ball bearing plants.

This book is good combat history; the author discusses the establishment of a mental shelter to deal with fear. The book also deals with the fears of new soldiers in combat, the feelings and mind set changes as exposure to combat increases and one becomes a veteran. He also discusses how soldiers feel when they are poorly trained and wartime experiences are not hurried back to training commands to ensure the appropriate training is conducted for new crews. Also he discusses poor equipment designs and the failure to check on combat conditions before designing such equipment.

The book is based on a journal that Mr. Comer kept during the war on a day by day basis. The style is quite readable. The serious thoughts of a soldier are interspersed among description of quonset hut life in England and the events which take place on the author's first twenty-five combat missions.

I recommend this book because it deals with the thoughts and reflections of soldiers as they adjust to the stress, strain, and danger of combat. Even though it is written from the perspective of the Army Air Force of WWII, it has gems for all chaplains as they minister to military personnel.

**Chaplain (CPT) Thomas C. Condry  
U.S. Army**

## Hostage Bound Hostage Free

*Benjamin M. Weir and Carol Weir*

***The Westminster Press, 1987, Hard cover, 182 pages, \$12.95.***

Ben and Carol Weir currently serve on the faculty of San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, CA.

May 1984 changed the lives of Presbyterian missionary Benjamin Weir and his family. After thirty-one years working in Lebanon, Ben found himself a

hostage. Thus began a sixteen month ordeal. Antiphonally by chapters, the books tells the stories of how Ben and Carol responded to the horrors and uncertainties of terrorist captivity.

Throughout his captivity Ben Weir strengthened himself with the deep faith that he was never alone. He was confident that God would not leave him. He was certain also that his family and church would raise their concern for him in prayer. He thus avoided the pitfall of some captives, a feeling of total abandonment and disconnection from their family and nation. Ben Weir remained connected to those important relationships in his life. In his story he relates the experiences of captivity, the little victories over captors in efforts to garner information about location, and the difficult living conditions. The excitement and meaningfulness of getting a Bible, and the joy of meeting other captives like Father Martin Jenco and the moments of worship. As with other hostage accounts, Ben Weir shares the experience of great intimacy with other captors.

Carol shares her experiences, the fear, uncertainty and bureaucratic delays and limited information which filled her time. Strengthened by her congregation and church officials, Carol takes the reader on a story of family growth and solidarity and international travel to attempt negotiating Ben's release.

*Hostage Bound Hostage Free*, is a testament of love, hope and faith. It's more than just a good story. It's a deep affirmation of the power and presence of God in the face of the demonic. Would that we might all have the resources of the faith and courage to cope with solitude and captivity shared by Ben and Carol Weir.

Chaplain (LTC) Kenneth M. Rupp  
U. S. Army

## **Martin & Malcolm & America**

### **A Dream or a Nightmare**

*James H. Cone*

*Orbis Books, 1991, Hard cover, 358 pages.*

James H. Cone is the Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He has written many articles and books, including *Black Theology and Black Power*, *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation*, and *God of the Oppressed*. James Cone is universally acknowledged as "the father of Black Theology."

This book is a serious interpretive and reflective examination of the meaning of justice and blackness in America. Cone does this by comparing and contrasting the philosophies of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

Dr. Cone has succeeded in producing a challenging work that faithfully casts the two most dynamic spiritual and moral leaders of contemporary African-American history. King's integrationist philosophy and Malcolm's nationalist philosophy are respectfully placed in perspective and in context.

This book represents a dream that many African-Americans would have loved to have witnessed—a philosophical dialogue between these two great Black leaders. History only records one public meeting. During the March, 1964 U. S. Senate debate of the Civil Rights Bill, King and Malcolm spoke briefly to each other as they were leaving the building.

Cone overcomes an obvious challenge in writing such a book. Just as history does not note a substantial meeting between these two great men, subsequent writings of both men are often done by disparaging one in order to cast the other in a favorable light. Cone contends that one must examine both if one is to fully appreciate either. He sees the work of Dr. King and Malcolm X to be mutually compatible and not mutually exclusive. Cone also argues that both men faced common difficulties in being misunderstood. “The reason that sympathetic interpreters often miss the central role of religion in Malcolm’s thinking is that religion is commonly separated from struggles for justice. That was why Martin had such a difficult time getting the white church involved in the civil rights movement, and why liberation theologians in the Third World are so controversial today. Many people think that religion has everything to do with an individual’s personal relationship with God and nothing to do with society and one’s fight for justice in it.”

This book is destined to be a classic. I recommend it to anyone who is serious about studying King, Malcolm, and the effects of poverty, racism, sexism, and classism in America.

LCDR Lorenzo Cooper York, CHC, USN

## So Great Salvation: What it Means to Believe In Jesus Christ

*Charles C. Ryrie*

*Wheaton: Victor Books, 1989, Paper, 166 pp.,*

Dr. Ryrie (Th.M., Th.D. Dallas Theological Seminary; Ph.D. University of Edinburgh) was for many years Chairman and Professor of Systematic Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary. He is widely known for his Bible teaching and lucid writing style and has written a number of books, including: *Basic Theology*, *The Ryrie Study Bible*, and *Balancing the Christian Life*. Dr. Ryrie is retired and lives in Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Ryrie claims the various ways the Gospel is presented confuses people. Not knowing what should be believed can have eternal consequences. “We do not want to confuse or shortchange or obscure God’s good news of His grace—how He gave His Son so that we might have eternal life through faith in Him” (p. 23). Writing to make clear the grace of God, he examines crucial words and ideas “with the goal that this will clarify our thinking and then our presentation of God’s good news” (p.26).

In 14 clipped chapters Dr. Ryrie charts what he thinks are the crucial words and ideas necessary to an understanding of the gospel. Some chapter titles are: *What is the Gospel?*, *Fruitful or Faithless*, *What is Carnality?*, and



*Repent! About What?* He defines lordship and discipleship, and discusses the believer and his or her riches, the difficulty of belief, and assurance of salvation. Included at the end of the book is a "Definition of Key Terms" (from *Abiding in Christ* to *Sanctification*). There is also a scripture and subject index. A leaders's guide for study groups is available.

Dr. Ryrie is essentially engaging another fire mission in the continuing battle over issues raised by John F. MacArthur, Jr. in his book, *The Gospel According To Jesus*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988). The footnotes bear the burden of his argument: twenty of 62 footnotes reference MacArthur's book directly. The jacket of MacArthur's book says he "teaches that there is no eternal life without surrender to the lordship of Christ." Dr. Ryrie disagrees. He feels that those who would make the Lordship of Christ (i.e., obedience) essential to salvation (thus "Lordship Salvation") are not presenting the gospel clearly. They confuse the issue of grace.

I think Ryrie raises legitimate concerns over grace and assurance, both strong New Testament themes. MacArthur is right in stressing the possibility of false profession—there are requirements with the gospel (the Bible assumes an obedient believer). As with most theological issues, there may be a middle way. And therein often lies the solution.

Ch (ILT) Mark B. Nordstrom  
Chaplain, US ARNG

## **Tough Minds, Tender Hearts: Six Prophets of Social Justice**

*by William O. Paulsell*

*New York: Paulist Press, 1990, Soft cover, 207 pages, \$11.95.*

Dr. William Paulsell is President of Lexington Theological Seminary. He has written several books and articles on the history of Christian spirituality.

The purpose of this book is to identify some Christians whose energies are devoted to the resolution of social problems while being firmly grounded in a deep spiritual relationship with God. "The assumption of this book is that the integration of these two elements is essential to a well-formed Christian life." (pg. v). Six individuals who characterize this integration are studied: Martin Luther King, Jr., Simone Weil, Dag Hammarskjold, Dorothy Day, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Dom Helder Camara.

Many have studied Martin Luther King, Jr., as the social activist and have ignored his strong religious heritage as a Gospel minister. The author gives a brief history of Dr. King as with each account, and highlights his religious upbringing. Simone Weil sought to bring to the world's attention the wretched conditions of the "masses of the poor folk and outcasts of this world" (pg.37), in pre-WWII France. Dag Hammarskjold, served as the UN secretary-general from 1953 until his death in 1961. Our knowledge of his deep spiritual life is based almost entirely upon his personal diary, which



was published after his death under the title, *Markings*. Dorothy Day worked with the poor and homeless of New York. Her work was published in the journal, *Catholic Worker*. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is most known for his writings from various German prisons, and his ultimate death, days before his prison camp was liberated. Dom Helder Camara is noted as a leader of the third world, liberation theology movement. Taking the side of the common workers, even when his life was threatened, he sought to improve the living and working conditions of the poor.

Not all the accounts of these social activists are as gripping as others. Yet each revealed how an individual combined a deep personal religious experience and social action. The book is a much needed challenge to “comfortable Christians” and calls us to put our good intentions into actions.

Chaplain (CPT) David Scharff  
U.A. Army

## **If Ministers Fall, Can They Be Restored?**

*Tim LaHaye*

*Zondervan, Michigan, 1990, Soft cover, 192 pages*

Clergy failure in the area of sexual temptation is a problem that shocks and dismays clergy and lay persons alike. In the military environment such failure reflects on all chaplains and diminishes opportunities of ministry in which trust and vulnerability are essential.

Tim LaHaye writes a book that “explores factors that contribute to a minister’s fall and ways that ministers [chaplains] can avoid sexual temptation.” Moreover, LaHaye describes “how a church can deal with ministerial infidelity. . . .” Finally, the opinions of respected Christian leaders and pastors are given to determine if ministers should and can be restored to ministerial leadership.

Dr. LaHaye writes a book that every potential male leader in the church should read. The high cost of ministerial infidelity effects too many people in the church and hurts the witness Christians are able to have in society. The book gives guidelines for restoration that civilian churches and hierarchies could use. However, in a zero defects Army, it would be difficult to apply a restoration process to a chaplain and such work would and should be the responsibility of a chaplain’s endorsing agency.

The information and anecdotes that LaHaye shares, gives an immediacy that every minister can envision. Most ministers will relate to the dynamics that can place one in danger. LaHaye gives practical advice that if followed, will enable a minister to remain faithful to his wife and calling. The advice may appear simplistic to some, but self-control and attention to the primary relationship to God and spouse will prevent the tragic consequences of infidelity.

In chapter three “Why ministers Fall into Sexual Sin”, LaHaye

describes the way and means, in which infidelity can occur. He looks at the power of sexual attraction, the power of seductive women, and the power of emotional bonding. He describes how pride, resistance to accountability, and anger can lead to attitudes that lead to a moral fall. He warns how the need for success, the drive to fulfill goals and non-stop work habits can corrode a minister's moral life. He also mentions how uncontrolled lust, addiction to pornography and homosexuality lead to sexual sin.

The second half of the book examines restoration and practical ways to enable churches to restore fallen pastors. That there may be a second chance for ministers will depend on the grace of the church. Scripture details the lives of many who were given second chances. LaHaye's sub-titles give accurate descriptions: "Abraham, the Adulterer"; "Moses, the Murderer"; "Samson, the Fornicator"; "David, the King-sized Sinner"; "Jonah, the Rebellious and Disobedient Prophet"; and "Peter, the Betrayer". If God will restore a penitent and confessing saint, can we not do the same in all our relationships, not just in areas of infidelity?

Fourteen Christian leaders give their views concerning restoration. Among these are Jerry Falwell, Jack Hayford, Charles Swindoll, Richard C. Halverson and W. A. Criswell. All give reasoned positions that force hard and clear thinking to the pro and con positions.

I recommend this book. If you know someone in danger, this book's advice can help you display real love to a colleague. If marital dissatisfaction or distance are evident, this book can be prophetic in rekindling the home fires. And if the occasion to be part of a ministerial restoration committee occurs, the 8-step model can be helpful.

CH (CPT) Richard J. Chavarria  
U.S. Army

## **Classic Baptism. BAPTIZO An Inquiry into the Meaning of the Word in Classical Greek Writers**

*James W. Dale*

***Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers [1000 Brown St. Wauconda, IL 60084] 1989. (paperback)***

Out of print for many decades, this reprint is the first of a four volume set to be completed by 1991. Foreword author and well known Christian counselor, Jay Adams, writes: "No other work begins to approximate James Wilkinson Dale's four-volume set."

Most significant is that Dale's mountain of scholarly study does not solve the problem of baptismal mode by asserting that Christians must use one particular mode. Rather, he emphasizes that mode must be gotten from a context, not from the Greek word *baptizo* itself. This is the case since the classical writers one finds over forty different English verbs required to translate it properly in various contexts. Hence, the word cannot be reduced classical writers to one meaning.

As a Presbyterian, Dale employed sprinkling but did not disdain pouring or dripping. Readers will anticipate the second volume to learn how the *Septuagint* translators, Josephus, and other Jewish writers employed *baptizo*. Volume three covers John the Baptist, volume four the Gospels and Epistles, with a fifth volume bound thereto which treats early Church Fathers.

The promoter of this reprint has expressed his desire to see an end to the unnecessary dispute over mode of baptism. Dale has shown the way. He does not, however, address the matter of WHO is to be baptized, i.e., the infants or believers problem.

Chaplains will find this volume helpful in counseling those who come from diverse backgrounds and who will not have any means of knowing how ancient writers can shed light on a present day issue. Chapel libraries and resource centers will find this a valuable asset in their collections.

**Chaplain (CPT) Robert H. Countess**  
**U.S. Army (IRR)**





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# **Military Chaplains' Review**

## **Coming in Future Issues of the Military Chaplains' Review...**

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Articles on faith-sharing, discipleship programs, and spirituality from all the major faith-groups.

### **Twentieth Anniversary Issue — Winter 1992**

The Military Chaplains' Review is 20 years old! Help us celebrate its birthday in this issue. Request a reprint of your favorite article from past years. Write a note on why you like it. Tell us how the next 20 years should look!

### **Preaching and Worship — Spring 1992**

Preaching ideas, strategies, and approaches will be featured, as well as articles on worship and the liturgy. Send us your articles and a favorite sermon.